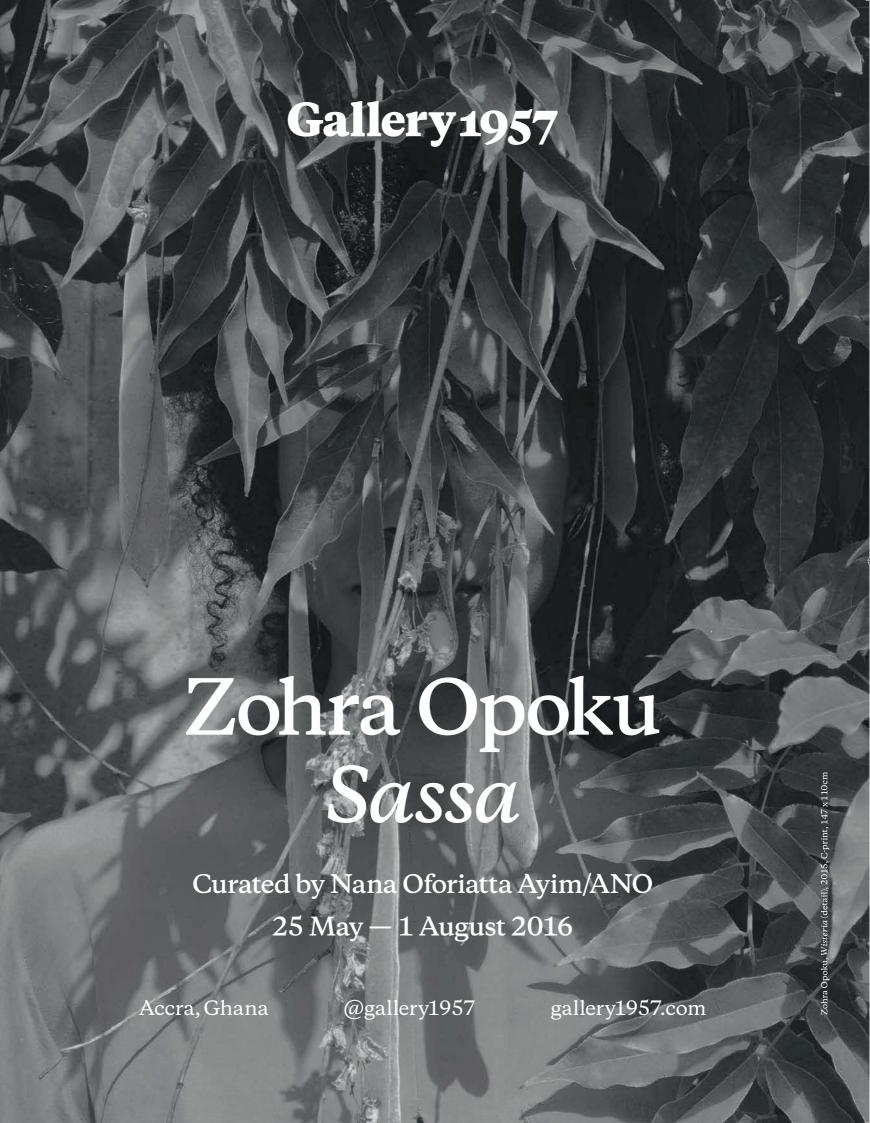


Carolina Mizrahi · Santiago Sierra · Mona Hatoum · Antoni Tàpies · Yayoi Kusama · Polly Penrose Ernest Pignon Ernest · Charlotte Colbert · Richard Saltoun Gallery · Chiharu Shiota

THE EVE OF AVANT GARDE

AFTERNYNE.COM



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EDITOR'S LETTER

Some time between 1966-76, Richard Diebenkorn wrote 10 notes on beginning a painting, number 9 on this list read "tolerate chaos." The course of Diebenkorn's career moved swiftly from abstraction to figuration and back again, often disregarding the popular styles and trends happening around him — if this process was a dance, I would step along with elegance and ease. If ever there was an instance where the soles of my feet avoided collision with broken glass in my *elegant* dance around chaos, it wouldn't be without the guidance of our managing director, Claire Meadows. Claire's phenomenal ground-work at the genesis of After Nyne has allowed me to step in safely into a position where I can invest new ideas, explore a few strange ones and implement the final findings in first-rate quality.

When we first explored the concept of the Avant Garde for Issue 10, much of the team took a rejective stance on whether the Avant Garde was still relevant; a few were interested in how it's evolved since it's conception, some wanted to focus on which of our contemporaries had taken traditional methods from old masters and re-invented them. And me? I wanted a tongue-in-cheek insight to the theory that 'it's all been done before.' And though it may have all been done before, I certainly knew it hadn't all been done in the same way.

The Oxford Dictionary defines avant garde as "favouring or introducing new and experimental ideas and methods." To this end, we have adjusted accordingly. You will find new concepts for columns, new uses of colour, dynamic new page designs and bold ideas about how to compose headlines, new typefaces... you will also notice the name of a new design co-ordinator in our masthead. I will resist the impulse to lavish praise on Tim's efforts, in the interest of letting you discover for yourself what he has accomplished.

"Modern art often seems subdued when cut off from the ambient praise and chatter that usually accompanies it's presence."

Having said that, modern art often seems subdued when cut off from the ambient praise and chatter that usually accompanies it's presence. The mystery of abstract art, or the intangible lure of performance art, may both be said to occupy the gap that lies between a set of ideas and their realisation in art. To sense it, one needs access to the ideas as well as the object. As Benjamin Murphy suggests in an essay on the exploitative works of Santiago Sierra, the pieces themselves can appear reductive – even disappointing – without some knowledge of the political and even spiritual beliefs that contributed to their conception.

In honour of the vanguard, we sought to produce a magazine that would be unusual, surprising and original but not wholly unfamiliar — our content is still as riveting, our Q&A's still as intimate and our reviews most certainly still as critical. We took to Issue 10 with the hammer and screw, and a few jolts of lighting. To wit, lightning is a metaphor for human emotions such as fear, reverence, creativity and much more. Witnessing lightning has a tendency to churn up a whole slew of internal reactions. In essence, lightning ignites our deeper selves. These bolts of energy can potentially tap into our most primal, basic emotions... from Charlotte Colbert's penchant for the surreal, to Ernest-Pignon Ernests artistic protests against abortion and the antediluvian references of our cover story...

welcome to the Eve of the Avant Garde.

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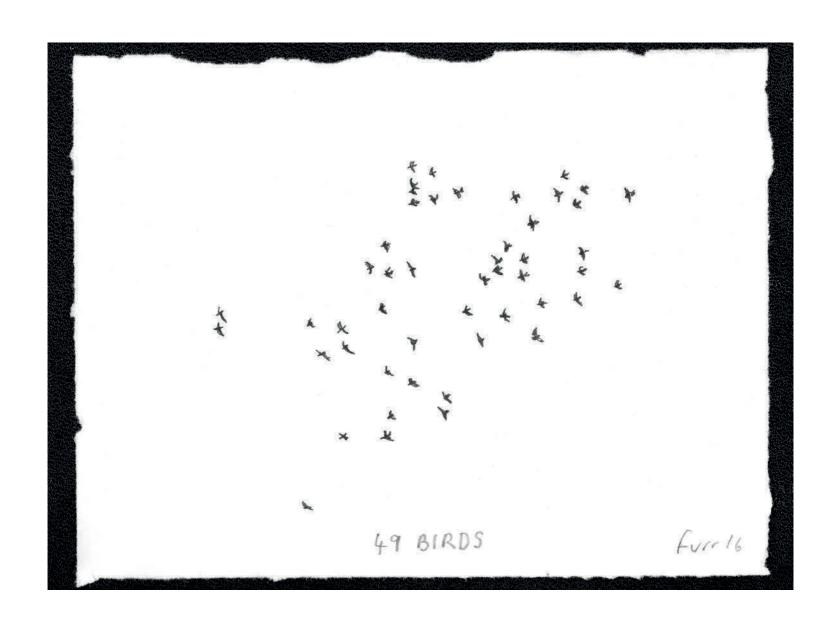
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IN LOVING MEMORY

During this difficult time, we offer heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the 49 victims who lost their lives during the tragedy in Orlando.



A Tribute to the Orlando Victims, Christian Furr, for After Nyne, 2016

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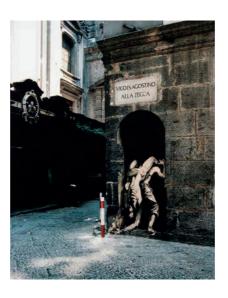
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Santiago Sierra

The Empathetic Exploitation of Reality

WORDS · BENJAMIN MURPHY

Santiago Sierra is a Spanish artist who creates works that are seemingly morally bankrupt, and that initially inspire revulsion in the minds of most. The pointless menial labor of marginalised members of society is what Sierra uses as the raw materials with which to create his works, and it is this that people find the most distressing. Previous works have included: paying illegal immigrants to sit under boxes in galleries for hours at a time; bricking a gallery worker inside a room for 10 days; and covering 10 Iraqis in hardening foam.





BOTH SPREAD IMAGES: 160 cm line tattooed on 4 people, Dec. 2000, Spain.

In one work '160cm Line Tattooed Four People' – four prostitutes are paid in the price of a shot heroin, to have a line tattooed on their backs. The line is thin and straight, and spans the entire width of the back of one, continuing across all six backs. The tattoo machine needle echoes the needle through which the nominal amount of heroin will be administered, and the tattoo speaks of the permanency of the tattoo in contrast to the immediate and short-lived effects of the heroin.

In this work, the women involved have made a conscious choice to accept the tattoo for the recompense offered. The decision is theirs alone, yet to the viewer this is unarguably exploitative and insensitive. Heroin addiction is tragic in its banality, and this is something that Sierra exposes through his exploitation of these women, in an equally banal and tragic way.

For the individual women tattooed, this work is clearly exploitative and unethical, but - if by its execution the needs and struggles of the chemically dependent are exposed to a wider

audience, then the work can serve some positive purpose. This work may serve society on the whole, as through its utter depravity it may encourage people to offer help to those affected by addiction in a similar way.

The problem here lies with a society that allows these people to become so desperate that they are willing to go to such lengths. Sierra himself explained the work saying: "The tattoo is not the problem. The problem is the existence of social conditions that allow me to make this work."

This exploitation of individuals in order to serve society on the whole is unpalatable, but it is this unpalatability that affects us so profoundly, thus creating a real empathy that would be unachievable through the use of mere statistics. The exploitation of a few to serve the greater good may be ethically ambiguous, but it is something that happens all across society and all throughout history, to varying degrees of severity.



"This exploitation of individuals in order to serve society on the whole is unpalatable, but it is this unpalatability that affects us so profoundly, thus creating a real empathy that would be unachievable through the use of mere statistics."





3 X SPREAD IMAGES: House in mud (triptych), Feb. 2005, Germany.





The revulsion that these works create in the viewer can be incredibly powerful in the fight against social injustice. Sierra's works expose exploitation that is already there, even inside the institutions in which he shows his work. Sierra may pay someone minimum wage to sit in a gallery for four hours per day, but just down the corridor a security guard is paid the same amount to stand for often longer amounts of time.

In many ways, his work is the antithesis of Maria Eichhorn's most recent work 5 Weeks, 25 Days, 175 Hours; in which she spent the budget for the show on closing the gallery and paying the staff to take the full duration of the show off work.

By highlighting these issues in the way that he does, Sierra stuns the viewer into action like the shock of cold water, and through this we are compelled to alter these types of situations in our own lives. His works afford the subjects a physicality that promotes much more intense feelings of empathy than can be created by plain numbers, seen upon a white page.

This works in much the same way as the documentation of war by photographers such as Don Mccullin. In a way, war photography is exploitative of those depicted dying and desolate, but the way in which these horrors are documented can promote viewers to help is incalculable. In this sense, the ends more than justify the means.

The exploitation of marginalised workers isn't something that often makes headlines; it is the type of issue that is easy to sweep under the rug, and one that isn't likely to sell many newspapers. Those who are being exploited are often fearful or unable to stand up for themselves, and if they do, they risk losing their only source of income.

As a society we are programmed to exploit, always seeking the most high-quality product or service for the lowest price. Phrases such as 'bargain' and 'great value' suggest a victory for the consumer at the expense of the producer. Commerce and the payment for services is not an altruistic system, it is predicated on cynicism and exploitation. Menial wage exploitation isn't a bold or particularly visible form of injustice, and it will never garner headlines like racism,

sexism, or homophobia. By creating his works, Sierra is fore-fronting these issues and making them unavoidable; we are unable to ignore such horror, and therein lies the beauty of his works. There is no stronger way of compelling help from those who are able to give it, than by exposing to them their silent complicity in the injustice that they are so repulsed by.

Through inaction and acquiescence, we are all complicit in certain forms of exploitation; from the cheaply made items we consume and dispose of; to the sweatshop-made fashion we buy. We are constantly looking for the best deal: the highest quality with the cheapest price. This frugality when misdirected can fuel the exploitation machine, it pushes prices for products and services lower, and as a direct consequence it is the disadvantaged that suffer the greatest losses.

Things (especially art) take their meaning from the viewer's cache of similar past experience. The viewer attains their perspective by evaluating their feelings and understandings, seen through the prism of memory and how similar events have affected them.

If the positions of the artist's ethical sensibilities, or the way those are portrayed are too obvious, the viewer reads the work as propaganda and becomes automatically and subconsciously defensive; or worse, dismissive. Art created didactically is better described as an applied art, or a piece of design, rather than true art — an idea summed up accurately by Gilda Williams: "If an artwork's message is self-evident, maybe it's just an illustration, a decorative non-entity, a well executed craft object, hardly counting as 'significant' art at all."

This means that meaning and intent on the part of the artist must be vague, so as to be absorbed neutrally and thus ruminated upon by the viewer. The viewer can then decide through further consideration the ethical or philosophical undertones to the work, and can feel as if they have discovered them independently. This is the best way to convey ideas through art and produce real change. It leaves the decisions up to the viewer, and the gratification they receive when they feel like they have understood, or elucidated meaning from a work is profound.

THE EMPATHETIC EXPLORATION OF REALITY

BELOW X 3 IMAGES:
Polyurethane Sprayed on the Backs of 10 Workers,
July 2004, London.







"To tear ourselves away from the everyday, from habit, from mental laziness which hides from us the strangeness of reality, we must receive something like a real bludgeon blow."

- EUGÈNE IONESCO

Upon entering a gallery, the viewer is somewhat unguarded when it comes to political discourse, and is thus more easily affected. Certain media outlets, orators, and publications for example can be dismissed before they have had a chance to convey any information due to the viewer's preconceptions about their bias, validity, or trustworthiness. This is less frequent in an art gallery however, which it is why the gallery setting is the perfect arena for information dissemination and discussion. The very act of placing an item or situation into a gallery setting opens it up to a level of scrutiny that the complexity of normal life suppresses.

What makes Sierra's work all the more powerful is that it

isn't some grandiose attempt to topple governments or promote revolution; it simply shows how people can affect change in a very real and tangible way. The change Sierra is suggesting is the rejection of a system that isn't working, and he is showing us exactly how to go about forcing that change. Upon seeing his work I cannot imagine any viewer not reevaluating how they see cheap labor, and changing their actions towards those less fortunate.

To borrow a phrase from Eugène Ionesco - "To tear ourselves away from the everyday, from habit, from mental laziness which hides from us the strangeness of reality, we must receive something like a real bludgeon blow."

Santiago Sierra:

On the Responsibility of an Artist

Have there ever been any ideas that you have decided would go to far [morally], and have thus abandoned?

I guess guess you're referring to the remunerated series carried out years ago. These works always produced moral questions - bringing to the Temple of Art both the suffering and the boredom of the working world. However many of these specific actions bring suffering and less boredom that give a whole life into the labour market, as unfortunately it is common. On the other hand, and being firmly advocate of the abolition of work, all these actions go against my principles. They reproduce the principles of the enemy, which is intended. It is not my morality that those works reflect. It is the capitalist morality. They are testimonies of our time.

Do you think all art is political, and do artists have an ethical responsibility to consider when making works?

I understand art as an exercise in freedom and the artist as the creative being. I am not g oing to tell anyone what he must to do, and besides I like diversity. There are obscene works of contemporary art that neglect the contemporary disasters, of course, but I feel good that there is also the escapist option of ignore the war front.

Very few of your works result in a sellable object (or at least that isn't the prime reasoning for creating the work), is this a comment upon, or rejection of the consumerism of art in the world today?

No, the thing is that making sculptures is more much expensive than making a performance. People come and go alone, you don't have to store it [like you would have to store a sculpture]. It is abundant, ubiquitous and cheaper than any material that you can use in sculpture.

How do you think your work benefits society on the whole?

I hope that it doesn't. Who would want to work with that monster [society]? This society doesn't serve, it is necessary to build another.

What's Art Got to Do With it?

Conceptual Art in Britain 1964—1979

 ${\tt WORDS} \cdot \textbf{JESSICA RAYNER}$

Art as an Act of Retraction (detail), 1971, Tate Archive, ©Keith Arnatt Estate

The echoing rooms of the Tate Britain, Millbank house a historically rich collection of works providing a visual documentation of the growth of British art. Alongside J.M.W Turner's moody landscapes and Francis Bacon's grotesque figures, there is a rebellious spirit embedded in the heart of the gallery as the approach towards art begins to shift alongside the ever-changing social environment of Britain. It is this sense of rebellion that became the driving force in the conceptual art movement of the 1960s against the increasingly commercialised art world. As part of the Tate's engaging calendar of exhibitions, the unruly nature of conceptual art became the focus of curator Andrew Wilson's latest retrospective for Tate Britain.

Paintings from the masters sit peacefully in their conventional beauty, but as you move through the gallery you can feel the beating energy of a new-wave of artists at its heart, with the traditions of the past appearing (almost) to be in acceptance of their place in art's history. The radical 'new thinking' of artists such as Keith Arnatt and John Hilliard became the basis of conceptual art, which sought to question the function and social purpose of the artist's chosen medium.

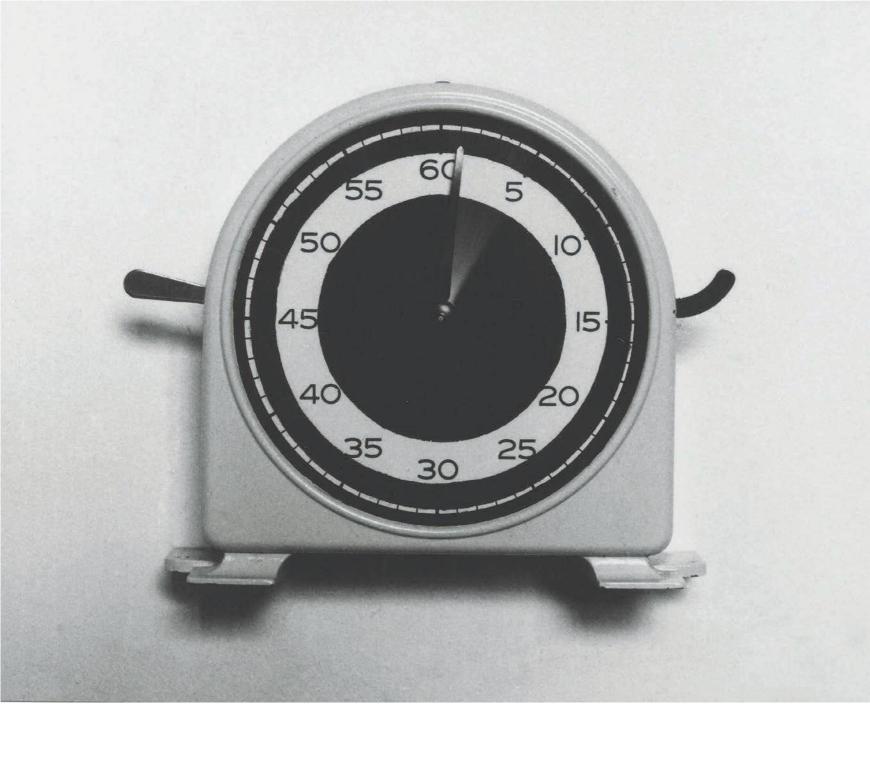
It cannot be denied that at times conceptualisation of art came to be associated with an inescapable sense of heaviness, with the use of language and data being an integral element. But this is a preconception that Andrew Wilson acknowledges and ultimately rejects, "The misconceptions are, I imagine also the result of a prejudice against work that is predominantly black and white, textual and – to some people – perhaps not as visually rich as they might like. This is quite difficult to overcome. However, I set out to make the passage through the exhibition as clear as possible; to mark out the distinctions between an analytical conceptual art and a more inclusive conceptual art being the result of different kinds of approach - the former coming largely out of an address to modernist painting, the latter to modernist sculpture."

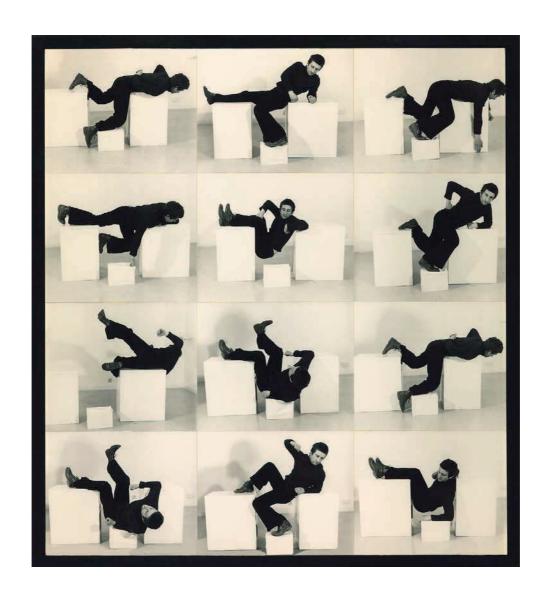
In fact these predetermined ideas of conceptual art work in the exhibition's favour. I entered the retrospective expecting to want to run away in despair, yet the works on display stir a sense curiosity that creeps over you and draws you in. There is no doubt that the retrospective is hard going, which some critics simply dismissed as being 'antiseptic'. I cannot help but feel that this comes out of an

unwillingness to accept conceptualism as art, in opposition to its controversial place in the art world. But I found myself respecting conceptualism, for it does not shy away from the analytical, nor does it claim to be a vivid, visual display concerned with aesthetics because it does not strive to be; instead the vibrancy comes from the exuberant spirit that inhibits the work. For example Michael Baldwin's 'Drawing (Typed Mirror)' turns tradition upside-down by replacing a painting's surface with a mirror and viewers are instead confronted with an image of themselves. If you simply take the exhibition at face value, it is easy to mark it as static - but it is not trying to be anything extraordinary. It is a journey through the influential figures of the movement, whose impact on art can still be felt today. "People can expect to be challenged. This is an art not of contemplation though it is visual - but one of active looking and critical reading. The ways in which these artists reformulated their attachment to the world around them is both exciting to us now as viewers because what they did in the 1960s and 70s continues to inform much of the art of today," Wilson stated.

Discarded oranges, a pile of sand dust and a canvas painted pitch black are what greet you, a curious trio that creates instant confusion. Each piece sought to destabilise the values of modernism that were concerned with the experimentation of shape and form, with artworks that are not grounded by space or volume, but by time. There is no structure, the work seems completely random and it can easily be mistaken as 'lazy' however everything on display comes out of meticulously collected data and a conscious decision to disorientate the viewer. Conceptual art proposed an art where the idea was placed above the work's material form, these artists do not want to sit amongst the likes of Turner but rather question the role that art has in society.

The only record of the existence of Bruce McLean's 'Floataway Sculpture' is a series of faded black and white photos. The physical sculpture, made from natural materials such as wood shavings and mud, has long washed away after McLean returned it to the environment from which it was made. An action that may seem completely absurd, but was in resistance to the commodification of the art object. I found myself peering over the photographs with an eagerness to learn more.

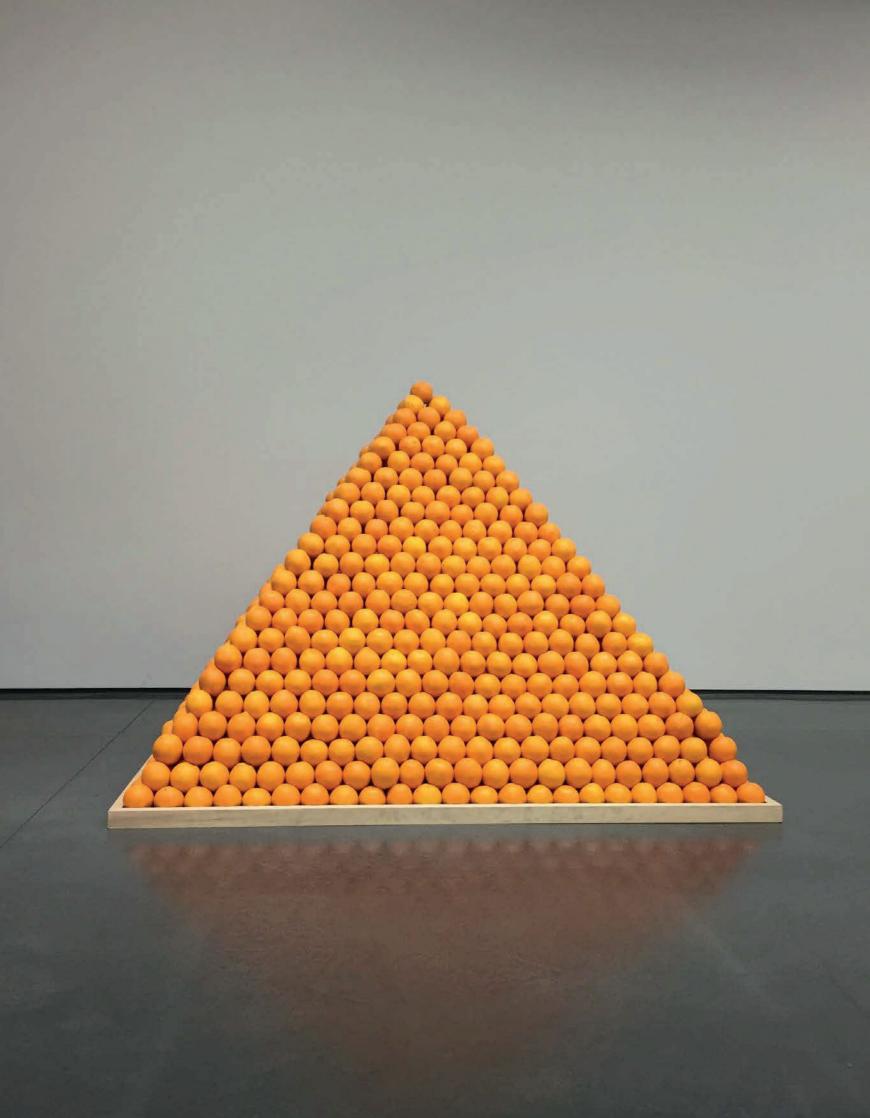




ABOVE:
Pose Work for Plinths, 1971,
Tate Archive, ©Bruce McLean



ABOVE:
Self-Burial (Television Interference Project) 1969,
Tate Archive, ©Keith Arnatt Estate



Roelof Louw's 'Pyramid of Oranges' was significantly depleted on my visit and sat looking rather sad, but the literal destruction of the piece is what Louw intended. The work's caption ends by encouraging viewers to take an orange, yet most onlookers simply cast a bewildered glance at the fruit. Even if not all the viewers join in consuming Louw's piece, it still works to distort the relationship between the viewer and the artwork, which is visually disappearing before their eyes.

Disrupting permanence becomes a central theme, with Keith Arnatt's 'Self Burial' continuing to explore and reference the disappearance of the art object. The photographs show Arnatt gradually disappearing under the ground. In 1969, the series of images were broadcasted on German TV with no announcement, leaving viewers to make sense of what they could. The lack of explanation forced onlookers to come to their own conclusion and is part of the artist's desire to question the nature of art. But what struck me about the photographs and similarly to the other pieces on display, was the underlining sense of humour that added a touch of light-heartedness just when you felt as if you were becoming bogged-down in the analytics - standing looking at Arnatt sink into the earth like a static flip-book could almost be the scene from a silent comedy sketch.

"Conceptual art changed the terms of reference for artists. For instance the art that it positioned itself against was an art that was held to be categorically different from the world in which it was sited. Conceptual art's engagement with context brought art back to a new compact with life - for some artists the boundary between art and life became indistinguishable." An idea that fed into Wilson's own eagerness to curate the retrospective, as part of exploring the active role conceptualism played in the development of the medium. This exhibition was always going to divide viewers but work that fuels debate in my eyes is always an example of its lasting influence, no matter how resistant some might be to accept it. Conceptual art of the 1960s will always be that weird, slightly estranged Uncle no one wants to sit next to at family dinners. People might greet conceptualism with reluctance but it has a distinct place in the development of art practice. The impact on the work of contemporary artists cannot be denied, as it opened up a whole new channel of thought and approach to the medium. Conceptual Art in Britain manages to capture a sense of liberty, despite at times being more of a subtle hint at rebellion, which defined the movement and opened the doors for a new era of artists.

Conceptual Art in Britain 1964-1979 runs at Tate Britain, London until 29 August. LEFT PAGE: Soul City (Pyramid of Oranges) 1967, Tate Archives, ©Roelof Louw

Antoni Tápies Today

Artist as Protestor, Artist as Shaman

WORDS · JAZ ALLEN-SUTTON



— In 1940, aged seventeen, Antoni Tápies suffered a heart attack connected with his tuberculosis, and during a two year long period of convalescence he experienced the first of a series of mystical visions. Outside of his room in the sanatorium, Franco had been brutally repressing Spanish society and culture, Tápies' family were facing economic ruin and social ostracism, and the Second World War had started. At a time of frustration and longing for health and a creative outlet, the teenager devoured some of the great works of literature. He was trying to understand a world that seemed to be slipping through his fingers. He wrote, but it didn't satisfy him. In his memoirs he states:

"When at the peak of my romantic adolescence I tried to write a poem, that memory hounded and tormented me. I didn't break free from it until I began to paint, realizing that by means of the canvas I could say things without speaking."

— ANTONI TÀPIES

PREVIOUS SPREAD:
Gris Uniforme n° LVI, 1957-1990, Courtesy Fundacio Tàpies

NEXT SPREAD:

Materia i cartons, 2006, Courtesy Fundacio Tàpies



"In the Santuari del Miracle I underwent a veritable transformation. I feverishly filled many drawing books, encouraged by my belief that perhaps one day, with my art, I would be able to produce something of value for my country, and for the world. In some cases, timidly perhaps, I dared to draw on the realm of the unconscious, of dreams, of hallucinated visions."

ANTONI TÀPIES

"When at the peak of my romantic adolescence I tried to write a poem, that memory hounded and tormented me. I didn't break free from it until I began to paint, realizing that by means of the canvas I could say things without speaking."

Tápies' father didn't want him to be an artist: it was safer to be a lawyer like he was, but Tápies had lost faith in Catholicism and Spanish society. He had been an eyewitness to the bombardment of Barcelona by fascist planes. The human tragedy was immense: 500,000 people had died in the civil war, and the victory of Franco was a major defeat for socialism, a cause he (and his father) identified with. Tápies needed to paint to expunge his sense of rebellion and disgust. Having been hospitalised again in the summer of 1945, something significant happened. He says: "In the Santuari del Miracle I underwent a veritable transformation. I feverishly filled many drawing books, encouraged by my belief that perhaps one day, with my art, I would be able to produce something of value for my country, and for the world. In some cases, timidly perhaps, I dared to draw on the realm of the unconscious, of dreams, of hallucinated visions."

In 1949 Life Magazine hailed Jackson Pollock as possibly America's greatest living artist, and the atomic bomb had put into relief the possibility that soon mankind may no longer exist; writers and artists with the money were dashing to their nearest psychoanalyst. Tápies meanwhile was able to make an initial impression on the art world through the publication of some of his work in the avant-garde journal Dau al Set where he enjoyed a fruitful relationship with the Catalan poet Joan Brossa. Tápies had found someone to bring in to his creative process, and, often walking together through Barcelona at night, they discussed their mutual interest in Kakuzō, Einstein, Freud, Picasso and Marx. Tápies trusted Brossa enough to allow him to choose some of the titles of his paintings, and through Brossa Tápies met Joan Prats, who became the second person to buy one of his paintings. Prats would go on to be instrumental in establishing Tápies' name in the art world and introduced him to Joan Miró amongst other luminaries.







Forma negra sobre quadrat gris, 1960, Courtesy Fundacio Tàpies

LEFT:
Gris amb dues taques negres, 1959, Courtesy Fundacio Tàpies

In 1953 Tápies sensed the need for a change of direction. He was now famous and financially independent from painting in a style reminiscent of the Surrealists and Dadaists, but he had to find a language on the canvas that was new and reflected his own personal sense of amazement at being alive whilst also offering an authentic response to the gravity and pain of the changes that had taken place around him in Spain and the wider world. He undertook a period of isolation from his friends and worked to exhaustion in his studio. While he shot into, what he called, 'the void' his wife Teresa was the only constant presence. The word Tápia in Catalan literally means 'outside wall', and many of the artist's paintings produced after this period of seclusion feel like they are segments of old walls eroded with the passage of time. These canvases were sometimes left bare or else illustrated with additional symbols or images: items such as crosses, underwear, cracked plates, scissors, sofas, gates, beds, dresses and pieces of cardboard appeared; he alluded to the darkness of torture instruments, hanged men, burnt bodies, the military and, mutilations. His canvases from the 1950s and 1960s were densely built up with a mix of ground chalk, marble, earth, sand and glue; grattage was used to draw out detail; the paint was applied in broad, unbound brushstrokes; and the surface texture was cut, scratched and scraped out.

Tápies' titles allow for a variety of interpretations, but Roig i negre amb zones arrencades (Red and Black with Tears, 1960) could conceivably be a chair or a crown with two large chunks of red removed. It has the feel of a grand family heirloom that should have been thrown away but has been patched up and kept nonetheless. Ocre-gris sobre marró (Ochre – grey over brown, 1962) is a wild exclamation mark; it is a figure of a condemned man, perhaps, shrouded by two curtains: he is holding his hands up in disgust as he reveals deep cuts to his body. Gris uniforme n° LVI I (Uniform grey n° LVI, 1957-1990) is covered in course grey and could be a door or some ancient musical instrument: finger prints, letters of the alphabet, a cross, a white diamond and a curved black sweep of colour lead the eye towards an indented panel that has crumbled around the edges.

Tápies chose textures, symbols, and images with a purpose in mind. He believed that whilst viewing his work spectators could experience an elevated state of awareness akin to certain religious experiences, and ideally someone could come to a painting with an ailment – a headache for instance – and be healed by looking at it; the ragged backs of the canvases aren't always easy on the eye but there is something consistently alluring about them.

When talking of his paintings in 1969 Tápies asserted: "This matter is but a support inviting the viewer to participate in the much larger game of a thousand and one visions and feelings: it is the talisman lifting or sinking walls into the deepest recesses of our spirit, opening and at times closing windows in the construction of our impotence, our bondage, or our freedom. The "subject matter" then may be found in the picture or it may exist solely inside the spectator's head. "Viewers' reactions will depend on their sensibilities. Some might judge the paintings ugly, others might see in their maker the soothing hand of a kindred spirit. Forma negra sobre quadrat gris (Black form on grey square, 1960), in it's positioning of a head-like form in front of a simple grey craggy background where the head itself seems to bend the border of the canvas as it encounters an amalgam of pin pricks, illustrates the electric spectacle of one viewer being made to think.

Tápies believed the profoundest works often grew from spiritual anguish or heightened tension, which could be harnessed through meditation. Documentary films have recorded the slight figure of the artist dressed in pyjamas and slippers as he circles a painting. The empty canvas is on the floor, and he is clicking his fingers in a mantric call for illumination. When he strikes the painting he does so with rhythmic thrusts. To Tápies, the work of a painter was on a similar plane to that of a shaman or a mystic. Whilst talking to Barbara Catoir between 1975 and 1976, and with Franco now dead, Tápies said:

"The gods, I repeat, are no longer in heaven, but the problems and conflicts of our individual and collective soul, manifested in religions, persist in people. The artist, among others – poets, philosophers etc. – can help decipher them."

If a Tápies catches you at the right moment, it can elicit profound contemplation. He began to sense art's talismanic potential when in the throes of one of a series of serious childhood illnesses. Painting was uniquely valuable to his life, and even though he grew up under Franco's cruel regime, he never lost faith in the power of art to help the spiritual development of others. After his death in 2012 the numerous works that he has left behind should go on to engender similarly serious aspirations today.

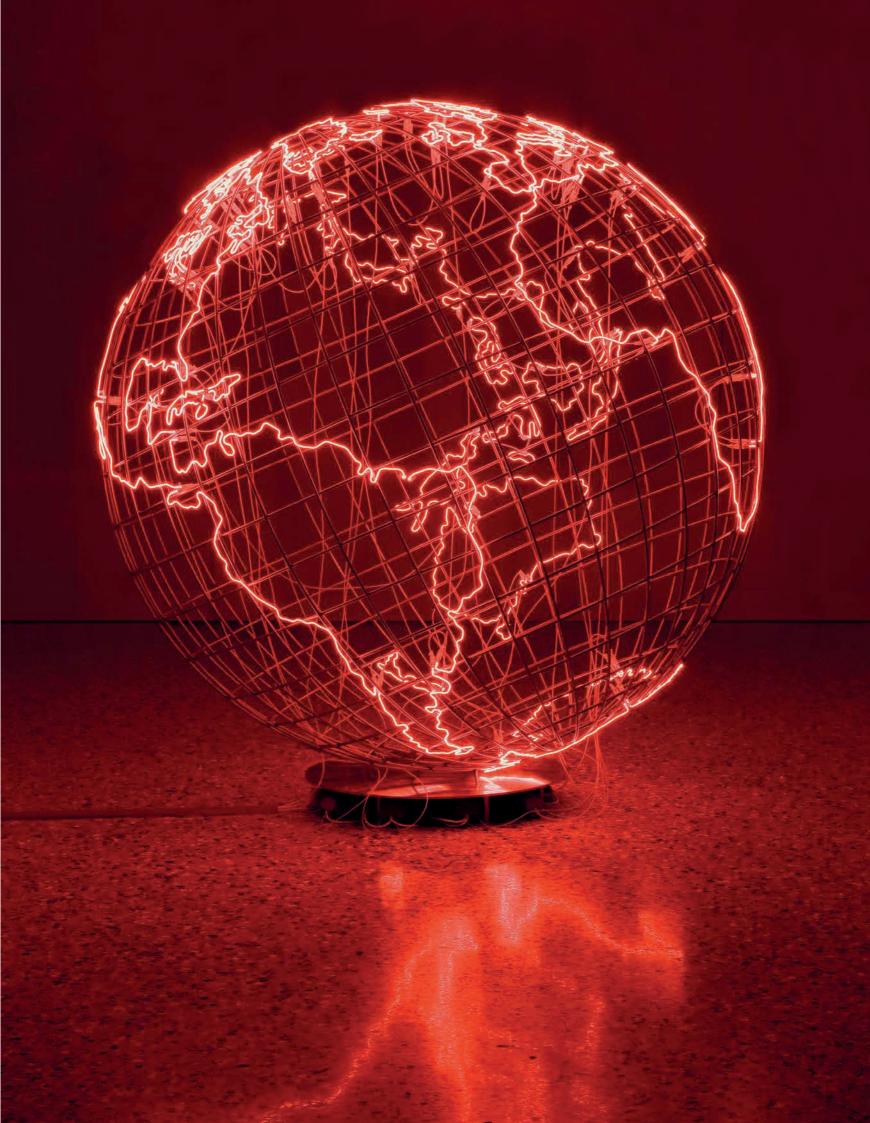
Forma negra sobre quadrat gris, 1960, Courtesy Fundacio Tàpies



The Implications of Emotion

Mona Hatoum's 35-Year Retrospective at Tate Modern

 ${\tt INTERVIEW} \cdot \textbf{KIRSTY WELSH}$



— Mona Hatoum's work demands to be felt - still images just aren't enough. Visitors to the Tate Modern's survey of her work - the first major UK exhibition of a career spanning 35 years - will hear the first installation before they see it. So Much I Want to Say consists of a series of close-ups of Hatoum's face, helplessly gagged by a pair of hands, as her voice repeats the six titular words on a loop. Later on, a recording of Hatoum quietly reading out letters from her mother competes with the harsh, threatening sound of electricity running through household objects and illuminating bulbs in the next room. This contradiction is typical of Hatoum's work, which is bold, intimate and astonishing.

Born in Beirut to a Palestinian family in 1952, Hatoum settled in Britain in 1975 following the outbreak of war in Lebanon. Using a variety of materials and media, her work explores themes of confrontation, violence, displacement, oppression and loss – creating installations which cannot fail to elicit a response from the viewer.



How does it feel to have such a large survey of your work back in the city where you first studied art?

I was stranded in England because of the outbreak of civil war in Lebanon in 1975 so I decided to study art in London and it subsequently became my home. It is wonderful to have a major survey of my work at the Tate Modern. It always means a lot more to get this kind of recognition in one's hometown.

Why installations? Do they appeal now in much the same way as performance art did in the early 80s?

In the early performance work I felt that I was demonstrating or delivering a message to a mostly passive audience. With the installation work, I wanted to implicate the viewer in a more physical and direct way. I wanted the visual aspect of the work to engage the viewer in a physical, sensual, maybe even emotional way; the associations and search for meaning come after that initial experience.

Your work has been described as a 'commentary on a crisisridden world'. Are there any crises in particular which have informed or inspired your work?

My work does not point the finger at any specific situation of conflict or name any specific crisis. It rather deals with the condition of conflict, displacement, disorientation, which can be relevant to any such situation in the world. Hot Spot 2006, for example, is a cage-like steel globe with delicate red neon outlining the contours of the continents on its surface. The work suggests that it is not simply contested border zones that are political hot spots but that it feels like the entire world is caught up in conflict and unrest.

You claim never to be trying to make a direct political statement. Is it frustrating to have certain labels attached to your work – or does it always come down to individual interpretation?

Because I come from an embattled background people tend to over-interpret my work as dealing with my geographical origins when it can often be reflecting on life in the West. An artwork can have multiple meanings if only it is approached with an open mind.

How much will this survey influence the direction your future work takes?

My work is often made in response to a specific location or space so it tends to go in different directions all the time. I am the recipient of the 10th Hiroshima Art Prize and working towards an exhibition there in 2017. This location alone has inspired me to create two installations that will be new departures for me.

PREVIOUS SPRED

Hot Spot III, 2009, Fondazione Querini Stampalia Onlus (Venice), ©Mona Hatoum

LEFT PAGE

Performance Still, 1985, Tate Archive, Courtesy White Cube,

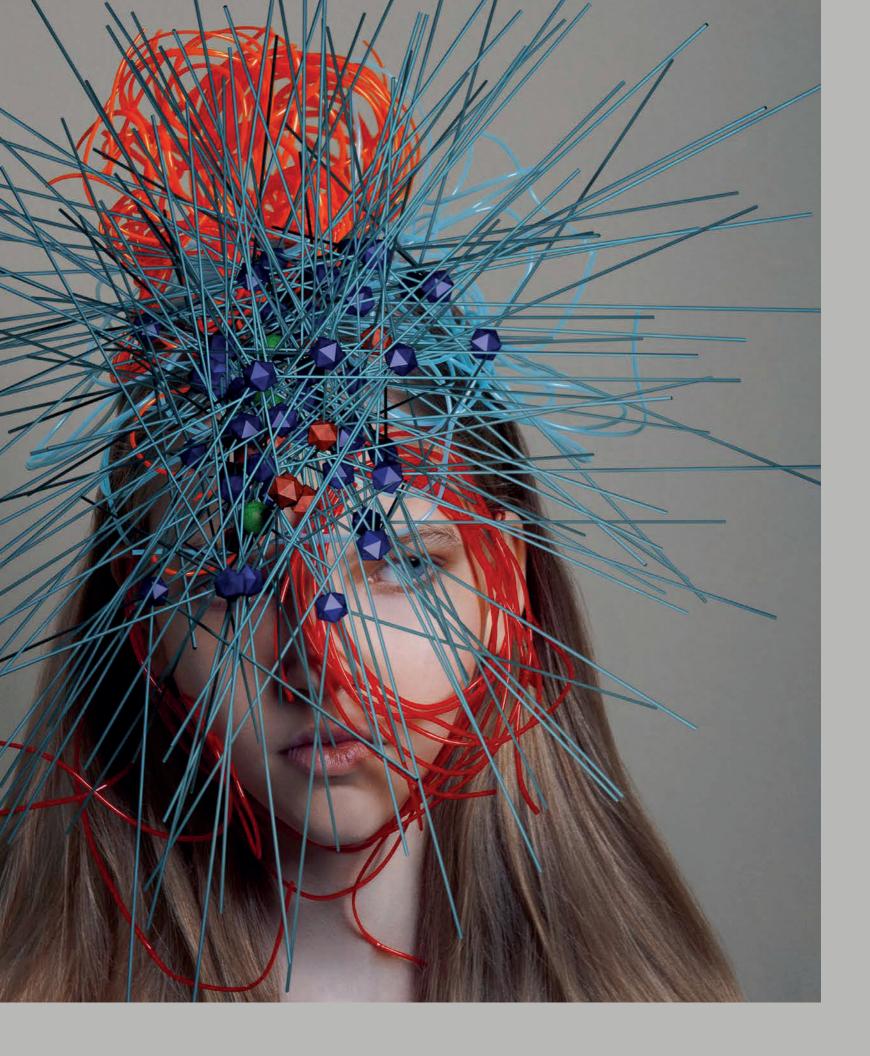
© Mona Hatoum

WHITE FOG

Photographer: **Nadya Filatova** Model: **Zoya, Lila's Models**

Style & Set Design: **Neonila Dezhda**

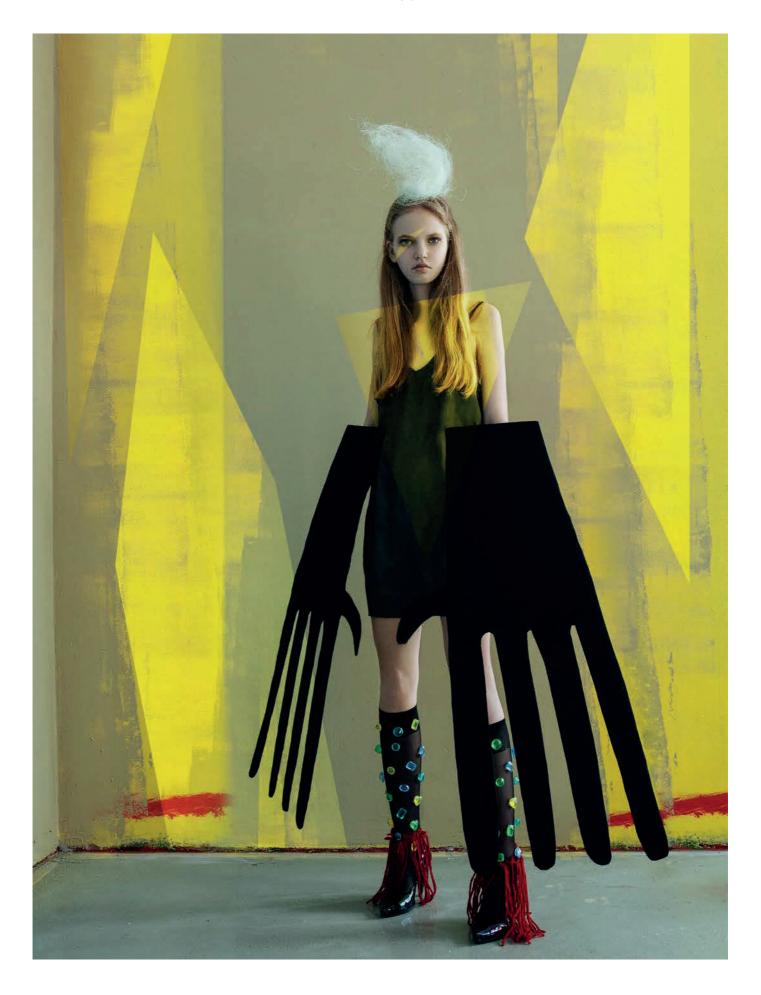
Hair & Make Up: **Stalina Peter**













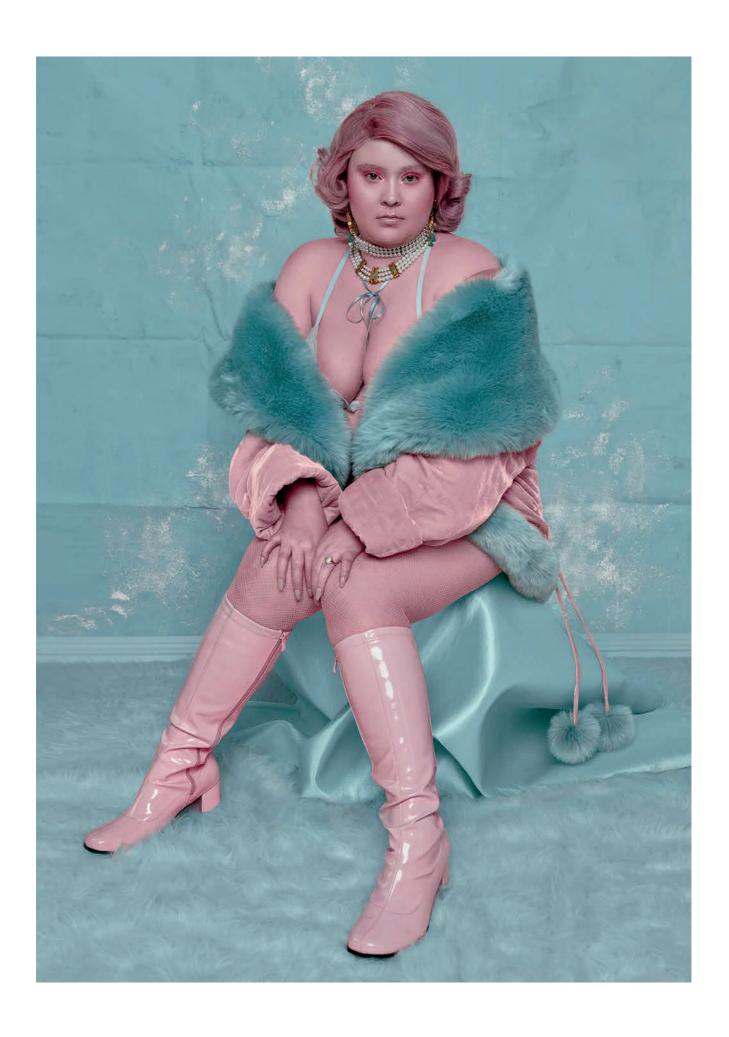


Carolina Mizrahi

RETURNING TO THE GENESIS OF INNOVATION

On the *Eve* of a New Dawn for the Avant Garde

WORDS · SAMANTHA SIMMONDS





"I wanted to create Eve in my eyes. Eve is such a classic idea and I'm creating a totally new interpretation."

- CAROLINA MIZRAHI

"Weather is not great but for people who love to work... you know, if I'm in the studio I don't feel like I'm missing anything," Carolina Mizrahi smiles as we settle in amongst the bank holiday brunch crowd, determined to enjoy an uncharacteristically sunny day in Notting Hill with avocado al fresco. Will she be going back to work later, though? "I might..." she admits. Admittedly, London's tepid early spring temperatures have nothing on those of the photographer's native Rio de Janeiro. But, besides the benefits of drizzle for a girl's work ethic, "London is a very nice city for creative people," Carolina proclaims. "There are so many people willing to collaborate. It is so easy to put a team together."

Notwithstanding her passion for collaboration, the former fashion designer, who moved to London to study photography and styling in 2010, personifies self sufficiency. Art director, set designer, stylist, casting director, photographer and even web designer, she evidences an extraordinary level of dedication to each and every element of her work. "In the beginning, if you have an idea and you want to find a way to put your idea out, you have to learn how to do it. You have to make a way," she shrugs. Is she ever tempted to outsource the research, the sample hunting, the furniture painting? "That's what I enjoy the most!" she exclaims. "I would even say that I'm more of an art director than a photographer. I like to come up with a concept, read some essays, get some books... and then I start to look into details like set design. I love to search for designers. I will spend easily two days looking, looking, looking... until I know everything that's going on now."

In fact, the process of photography is "just a way to register everything else that's going on" for Carolina, who admits that, in an ideal world, she would prefer not to be stuck behind a lens. "I'm not very into lighting, to be honest," she deadpans. She's tempted to jettison photography entirely, in order to concentrate on art direction, but worries that "as an artist I feel like if I don't do painting, if I don't do photography, I can't be an artist... What's your medium?". Wouldn't the one-woman powerhouse find it tough to relinquish creative control to another photographer? "No," she declares. The qualification comes a moment later. "Well, if I'm working with a photographer he has to be under my direction..."

If she does manage to tear herself away from her viewfinder, might she find a minute or two to dabble in design again? "I feel tempted. It [does] cross my mind... My head goes far - I'm always thinking about more than I can actually do!". Carolina has recently begun to commission emerging designers to produce pieces for her photo series. "It's a way to support people who are just starting and it's nice because you have something really custom-made," she enthuses.

The results are not only to be found hanging from gallery walls, but nestling within the pages of Vogue Italia. It's with a rare grace that she bounds along the tightrope dividing fashion from art whilst holding fast to her inimitable style. Does she ever feel compelled to compromise her artistry for fashion's sake? "You [do] have loads of restrictions [when working for a fashion magazine]," she agrees. "They have their rules and themes. The majority [still] want the very tall, thin, this and that. [But] if it's a major compromise I wouldn't do it."

"I think if you are a commercial model, you are too aware of yourself. I like to get people that are unconventional somehow, but at the same time I find them beautiful."

- CAROLINA MIZRAHI

Carolina prefers to work with non-commercial models "because I think it comes out more true. I think if you are a commercial model, you are too aware of yourself. I like to get people that are unconventional somehow, but at the same time I find them beautiful". However, although her characteristically hands-on approach extends to street and Instagram casting, she struggles to source less 'conventional' volunteers. "For instance, I would love to work with disabled models [but] they just don't apply - I can't find them anywhere! I hope to get even more diversity [in future series]." It's still a world most people don't feel entitled to participate in, I suggest. "Exactly!" Carolina agrees. "I think that's the first barrier. It's difficult to even get plus size models. [Although] I don't like very much this word 'plus size'," she clarifies. Those that do apply tend to be artists or friends of friends and "have a different mindset," she continues. "It makes [it] clear that this barrier is there. I think as an image maker you have this responsibility because the more you see an image the more it becomes normalised."

The older model in her exclusive new portrait series is a professional model, "but when I work with older people I feel that they have something in their eyes... experience... it comes out in a different way". In fact, it was the media's (under) representation of older women that sparked Carolina's artistic investigations into the changing representation of the female form. "I was interested in the way that the media doesn't let us grow older. There was a wave... many brands using older women - MAC, Lanvin, Marc Jacobs, American Apparel... but it's almost like a seasonal thing. I don't feel like those people are included for real. They are just used as a way to break the routine a little bit. It's done as something 'special'," she argues.

Are these brands facilitating the normalisation of 'proportional representation', I wonder, or simply cementing 'difference'? "I think a little bit of both," Carolina responds, after a moment's thought. "I would like to be optimistic and think that with time it's gonna become usual [but] I would probably not be on earth to see this," she laughs.

For After Nyne 10, Carolina took her investigations of the mutating female form back to the very beginning. "I wanted to create Eve in my eyes," she explains. "Eve is such a classic idea and I'm creating a totally new interpretation." So has the representation of women changed for the better over the last few millennia? "At all times there were bad things," she says, citing the corset as an example. "Women always had to sacrifice a lot in this society that's made in the male gaze. I think everything is very linked with capitalistic interests, especially now... [but] I feel like people are getting more aware of it and it's opened up a little bit of space."

"I'm kind of making a point that I'm a female artist and I'm doing very feminine stuff and that's how it's gonna be."

- CAROLINA MIZRAHI

No discussion of Ms Mizrahi's work would be complete without some consideration of its most immediately striking element colour. For this project, that means "taking out the race and the skin so you focus on the features and the shape of the face," Carolina tells me. Are her choices aesthetically or conceptually motivated? "A little bit of both," she answers. "Always a very small palette of colours." And is her favourite colour pink, by any chance? "It's funny - I love pink but I don't wear pink," the artist - whose casually fabulous jeans, tee and leopard print coat ensemble is offset by immaculate scarlet lips - muses. "But when I'm creating something I like to see ultrafeminine things - it's pleasing to my eyes!" Equally, though, pink is "a colour full of meaning". She lays it out: "The majority of successful artists are male. I'm kind of making a point that I'm a female artist and I'm doing very feminine stuff and that's how it's gonna be. I don't care if it's going to be accepted, because there is a lot of prejudice like, 'Oh, that's the cute stuff'. There is a lot of meaning behind many of the things I do. It's interesting to play with the stereotypes".

Hilariously, the colour was enough to deter most male visitors to The Other Art Fair from visiting Carolina's PINK installation. Those brave enough to venture in were those who were "a little bit more... ahead," she says. She compares the experience of curating the installation to "playing with post-production," something which "has always been very important for me as it allows me to go a little bit surreal, which is a place where I like to play a lot". Carolina is intrigued by my observation of her uncanny knack for turning the real into the seemingly impossible. "I get a lot of this kind of feedback

- 'We don't know if it's painting or photography,' and that's something I want to explore going forward," she tells me, pointing out that, in today's micro-manipulated media climate, "even when you see something real, you think that it's unreal". Whilst her work alerts its viewers to the normalisation of the impossibly perfect, is it important to her that the images she produces are always, in some sense, beautiful? "Yes. I like to do something and look at it like, 'Ah, that's beautiful'. And I think it's important to be true to what you like to do because otherwise what's the point?"

Testing artistic, social and technical boundaries with every press of the shutter and click of the mouse, Carolina's industrious, guile-free approach exemplifies virtually every positive quality associated with Avant Gardism. How does she feel about covering After Nyne's Avant Garde issue? "[Being considered] Avant Garde is definitely a good thing in my eyes," she confirms. "It depends who you want to communicate with, where you want to be featured, how you would like to be perceived. But yeah... definitely better than being considered conventional. If I have to be classified, I'm more happy on this side. It's nice to be a bit inspiring, to be considered 'fresh'... but when I'm creating something I'm not thinking about this."

Carolina will be exhibiting alongside JunoCalypso this summer at Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh. Her work will also be exhibited in this year's Other Art Fair from 6th-9th October, Old Truman Brewery, London.

EVE OF THE AVANT GARDE

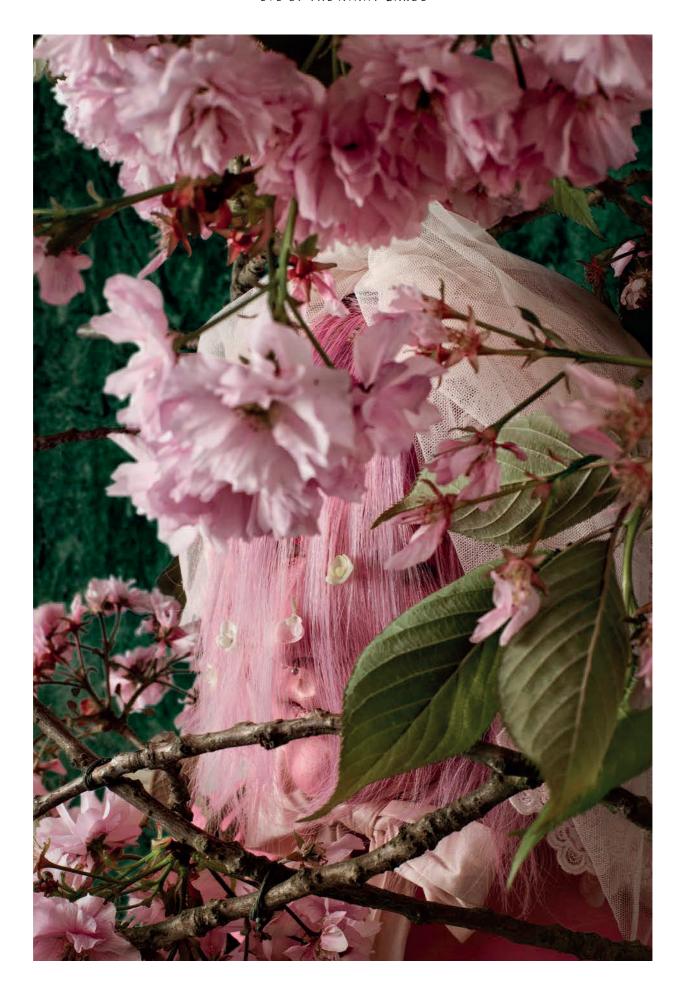


Carolina Mizrahi

























Yayoi Kusama at Victoria Miro Gallery

Infinity & Beyond

WORDS · EMILY BLAND

In her biggest exhibition for four years, the celebrated Japanese artist, Yayoi Kusama, presents a major show of new work created especially for this presentation by Victoria Miro galleries. The retrospective unfolds a very personal insight to her psychiatric past and how her art thus became a therapeutic tool.



Yayoi Kusama is now entering her ninth decade. The artist has pioneered a career that has spanned a good six of those. Her creative journey - from her native Japan, to New York, where she became a darling at the forefront of the flourishing Pop Art movement - is well-charted and has become part of the legend surrounding this vibrant, prolific and visceral artist.

She has variously been lauded as the most successful, most popular, highest earning and most influential female artist in the world. Her work is oxymoronically personal and universal. Jealously discrete to her individuality yet instinctively understood by all who view it.

The bold, colourful and graphic repeating patterns comprised of dots and semi-circles, which have formed Kusama's unfinished Infinity Nets series, are explained as representations of some of the vivid visual and auditory hallucinations the artist has experienced since childhood. Symptoms of a disorder which would eventually lead her, in 1977, to voluntarily check into a Tokyo psychiatric hospital, where she remains a resident to this day.

The exhibition spans the galleries' three locations across London. Victoria Miro gallery in London's N1 postcode is host to Kusama's newest Infinity Net paintings, sculptures and mirror rooms. In the peaceful waterside garden of the gallery's terrace, the shiny, mirrored orbs of Narcissus Garden float in the canal. The 'kinetic carpet' of spheres is a permanent installation at the gallery and was originally shown at the Venice Biennale in the 1960s, where Kusama sold the individual spheres under a sign reading: 'Your narcissism for sale'.

Her new paintings continue to examine the infinite and the sublime - obsessions which have preoccupied Kusama throughout her lifetime. Through the lens of her hallucinations, they can be seen distilled within her surreal and instinctive approach to art making.

The semi-circular scallops of Infinity Nets were originally inspired by the view of oceans from an aeroplane window. However the pattern has long since gone beyond the association with the ocean to take on a life of its own. It has become an abstraction of Kusama's self and her relationship to the infinite cosmos; with the dense patterns described by the artist as a form of active self-obliteration. If you look closely at the scallops you can see chaos in the order, with the brushstrokes often stopping abruptly to change direction.

Kusama's life has been characterised by breaking continuity. She moved homelands twice - from Japan to New York in the late 1950s, where she became a key figure of the Avant Garde and Pop Art scenes, until she returned to Tokyo in the mid 1970s. Having found success in the States, Kusama arrived in Japan alone, with no support network, and found herself a relative unknown once more. She would retain this familiar outsider status until the 1990s when her work began to draw interest internationally again.

Yet in spite of any physical displacement and geographical dispersion, the strong themes in Kusama's work, to which she returns time and time again, provide an anchoring constant; as evidenced by the reprise of the pumpkin motif in this latest exhibition.

Kusama has said that she feels an affinity with the objects she describes as 'humorous' and 'humble'. As the daughter of a seed farmer, these gourds were familiar sights in the fields next to her childhood home. In the past she has been quoted as saying that it is their unpretentiousness which she finds so appealing. And over time they have come to represent her alter ego. Against the backdrop of the huge and confrontational themes within her work, they offer a stabilising presence as a reminder of normality.

All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkin is Kusama's first mirror pumpkin room in 25 years. Golden, glowing gourds, decorated with the artist's distinctive repeating black dot patterns, are positioned on the floor and surrounded by mirrors to reflect them from all angles onto the walls and ceiling, enveloping the room's visitors in an infinite pumpkin embrace. It is a tender tribute to the objects of the artist's childhood affections.

In contrast, the emotional and raw Chandelier of Grief hangs in another mirrored room, this time concealed within a stark, monolithic white hexagon in the gallery's entrance. A painful and confronting piece, it pivots between escape and entrapment, inviting viewers to contemplate their recursive images as they are sublimated into the work while they do so.

INFINITY & BEYOND

PREVIOUS SPREAD:
Shedding Tears to the Season, 2015, Victoria Miro Gallery

BELOW-

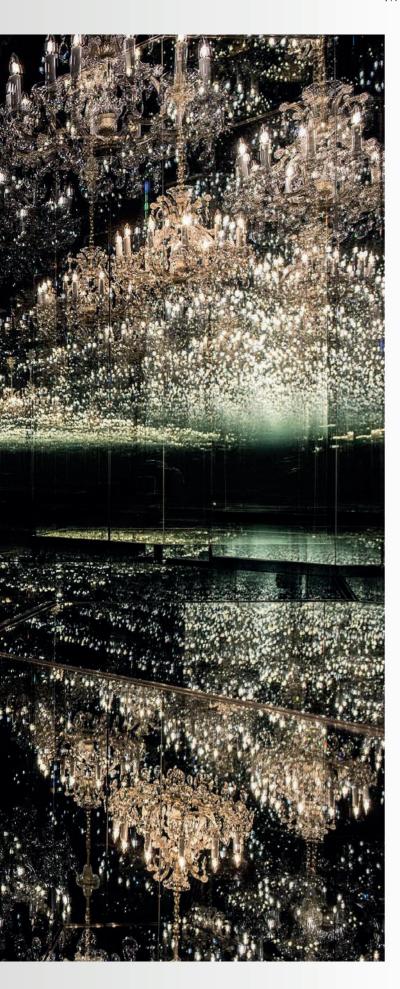
Infinity Room, 1965, New York ©Yayoi Kusama



All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins, 2016, Victoria Miro Gallery







Chandelier of Grief, 2016, Installation, Victoria Miro Gallery

At the Miro's Mayfair gallery space, more new paintings, this time from Kusama's ongoing My Eternal Soul series are displayed. To create these, Kusama uses a very fluid and organic way of painting. It is an unstopped, dissociative process. As she moves freely around the flat canvas the artist allows the artwork to flow intuitively. The end result is a diary-like visual account of her inner life that abounds with imagery reflecting the human organism at both a macro and a micro level. Eyes and faces in profile can be picked out from a background of indeterminate forms recalling cell-like structures.

There is undoubtedly something joyful about the execution of Kusama's work; in the psychedelia and colour of the abundant dots; in the absurdity and surrealism of the fecund pumpkins; in the baroque theatre of rhythmic, flashing lights; in the small mirrored rooms that draw you in and then hold you in a visual rapture. But it is too simplistic - shallow, even - to say it is joy that Kusama is expressing in these artworks. Rather there is something darker and more nihilistic at play.

The artist has frequently made physical appearances in her pieces over the years but even when she is not visible there is a tangible psychic presence that is intimate and implicit. Adopting the same mechanic as her mirror rooms, Kusama as both the subject and the object blurs the boundaries between artist and artwork in order to observe herself reflected back through her own gaze. But this should not be confused with narcissism. The art is created to allow the integration of the self into the work to be an open invitation to all. And to participate is to perform an act of piety instead of vanity.

Given the recursive nature of her work, it seems appropriate, then, that all eyes should be on Kusama as she is also currently the subject of a museum tour throughout Northern Europe. A retrospective curated by Marie Laurberg, curator and head of research at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark, Yayoi Kusama: In Infinity will travel from Humlebaek to Oslo, Stockholm and finally Helsinki. It includes several important works that have never been displayed before and is the first retrospective to incorporate Kusama's work in the areas of fashion and design.

Despite a body of work characterised by pauses for introspection and reflection, Kusama's mood does not seem to be a retrospective one. In fact this exhibition shows no inclination towards anything other than forward momentum. Even in her eighties Kusama continues to skirt the edges of her own spiritual event horizon to explore the infinite space beyond. The pursuit of infinity is imperative, for the artist knows, and is showing us, that to keep looping back on one's own reflection is to obliterate the self.

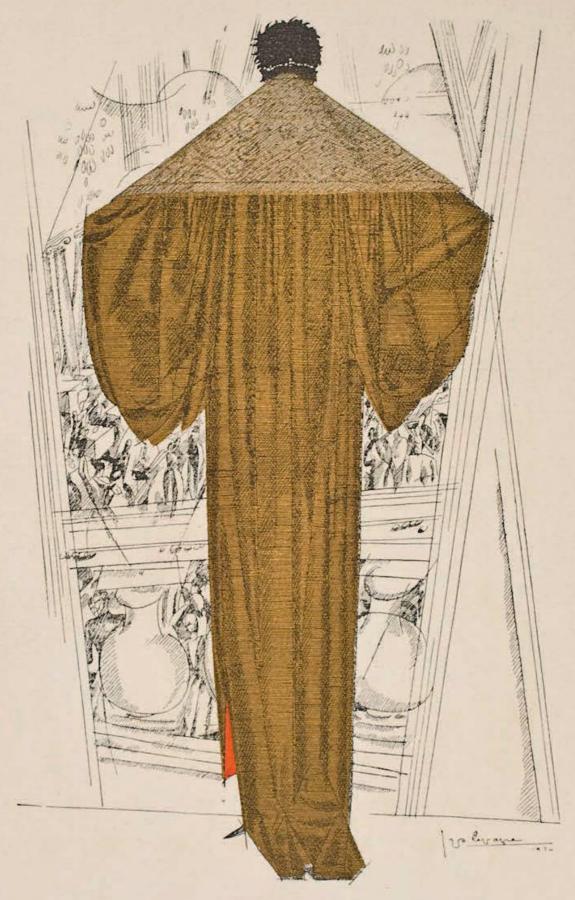
Yayoi Kusama's retrospective runs until 30 July 2016, Victoria Miro Galleries.

Fashion Feature

AFTER AVANT GARDE

Redrawing Fashion's Front Line

WORDS · SAMANTHA SIMMONDS



DANCING Manteau du soir, de Paul Poiret

hits of the fashion week catwalks, the average (wo)man in the street (well, scanning their Instagram feed) would be forgiven for wondering just what the point of it all is. Sleeves hanging down to your knees? Shoulder pads you could perch dishes on? Is this a joke? Art? A publicity stunt? Some kind of political statement? Surely not something anybody could be expected to wear in real life? There are no easy answers in some respects, insiders are equally mystified. Avant garde fashion may have released us from corsets and crinolines, but, a century on, is it still relevant?

When Henri de Saint-Simon proclaimed, "we artists will serve you as an avant garde... exercising a positive power over society, a true priestly function" in 1825, did he envision deconstructed suiting and 3D-printed shoes? Probably not. If fashion designers were initially wary of bucking the standards set by the Parisian establishment, though, by the time Gabrielle Chanel assumed the mantle of liberator of the female form ceded by Paul Poiret, they were leading the artistic vanguard from the rear. But how do today's most forward-thinking young creatives feel about staking out their own positions on the cultural front-line? "To me, it's about pushing boundaries," Sadie Clayton tells me, "If you don't do it, it doesn't exist. Make it exist, make it happen". Clayton, who launched her eponymous label in 2014, describes herself as a 'sculptural' designer with an 'architectural' approach. Her signature fabric? Copper. As her contemporaries begin to shy away from the 'artist' label, increasingly choosing to describe themselves as 'artisans' or 'craftspeople', Sadie insists, "Fashion is art. I produce art that happens to fit the human form!". Indeed, following Saint-Simon's argument that "the power of the arts is most immediate: when we want to spread new ideas we inscribe them on marble or canvas," one would be hard pressed to name an artistic medium claiming greater immediacy than the curation of the body itself.





PREVIOUS SPREAD: Manteau du soir, 1920, Paul Poiret



LEFT PAGE:
Paul Poiret Fitting Woman in Dress,
1930, Photo by George Rinhart

"I don't know if the term is still relevant because it seems that it has itself become so common in fashion. It sounds almost pretentious now"

— YOHJI YAMAMOTO ON AVANT GARDE FASHION

A certain degree of tension between artistry and craftsmanship, form and function, is inevitable. Whilst designers may prioritise one element over another, fashion's most celebrated pioneers are characterised by a healthy respect for all of the above. Neglect function - or craftsmanship - and artistry becomes conflated with artifice. But what is the modern fashion show if not performance art? Discussing the most recent batch of New York Fashion Week shows, Sally Singer, Voque's Creative Digital Director, opined, "The lifeblood of fashion is relevance - cultural, sociological, emotional... [but] in my view, the most compelling collections were those that paradoxically focused less on the consumer and more on doing something interesting and true to the spirit of the designer/ brand... No one who is buying designer fashion needs anything. What she wants, though, is something else entirely: to be inspired, surprised, amused, provoked, dazzled". Is the scope of designer fashion's impact limited to the rarefied echelons inhabited by its potential consumers? I put the question to Alexis Housden, whose BA collection for a 'third gender', which scooped the London College of Fashion's 'Collection of the Year Award' in 2013, anticipated the ascendance of the gender neutral movement. He points to the phenomenal success of the V&A's Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty as evidence of fashion's continuing social and cultural reach. Well, how many exhibitions have us clamouring to visit a museum at 4am?

Who, then, could argue that avant garde fashion has become irrelevant? Well, Yohji Yamamoto, godfather of the Japanese avant garde scene, for one. Speaking last year,

he offered, "I don't know if the term is still relevant because it seems that it has itself become so common in fashion. It sounds almost pretentious now". Don't worry, he still believes "in the essence of that spirit; to voice opposition to established values". But he does have a point. Challenging fashion's established conventions has become... fashionable. There are whispers that the 'avant garde' aesthetic popularised by the likes of Vetements is fast becoming just another stereotype, another convention. Does our continued use of the term ring hollow, when so little feels truly new?

From Poiret's early twentieth century appropriation of the caftan to Vetements' early twenty-first century appropriation of the DHL delivery driver's uniform, fashion's wheels have been oiled by an interminable process of recycling and reinterpretation. Gender fluidity and social media-driven 'realism' may feel new, but today's designers are simply penning the latest chapter in a century-long tale of the artistic liberation of the human form - and spirit - through the medium of fabric. Fewer than 100 years ago, when Chanel, in her own words, "gave [women] back their bodies," the 'masculinity' of designs epitomising modern notions of 'classic' femininity would have been reckoned scandalous. The torch of slow-burning revolution continues to be passed amongst her successors. Sculptors of the silhouette, the likes of Rei Kawakubo (who persuaded a generation of filles to dress 'Comme des Garçons' - and vice versa), Martin Margiela and Jonathan Anderson wield the power to scaffold, recast or demolish our conceptions of masculinity and femininity as they empower us to remould our own identities.

Graduate designer Grant-James Povey traces the trajectory of avant garde design back even further. Longing to "push the boundaries of modern menswear" with his own 16th century-inspired silhouettes (embellished with "a little theatre"), he declares that the avant garde really came "alive" during the Elizabethan era. "Each visit to court required more elaborate ruffs... new and more outstanding designs," he tells me. You get the feeling the young creative fondly referred to as 'One Step Too Far' by fellow students at the London College of Fashion would have risen to the challenge.

History - and physics - teach us that innovation cannot take place in a vacuum. Successive vanquards build upon the legacies of their predecessors. The truly revolutionary do not react against the work of those who have gone before simply for the sake of doing something 'new'. Socio-cultural evolution is an incremental process. punctuated by the occasional firework. But is fashion's evolution necessarily a social process, I wonder? Historically, avant garde designers have tended to cluster together, from Yohji, Rei, Issey et al. to the Antwerp Six. Vetements' 'anonymous collective' continues to grab headlines as New York-based trio threeASFOUR begins to gain attention for its exploration of a "utopian vision" of "human coexistence and collaboration". Things are feeling increasingly cosy. "I see myself as part of a community," Grant-James Povey confirms. "It is integral to appreciate the beauty of your fellow craftspeople". But, for some, like Thom Browne, who recently admitted to feeling "as though I am totally on my own because I don't know what the new developments in menswear are," breaking new ground is a more solitary process. "I feel like I'm alien in comparison to other new designers," Sadie Clayton agrees. "I seem to have a very different agenda and to be on a different path... which I'm grateful for."

So what does avant garde look like today? Like your friendly local DHL driver, maybe? Vogue.com contributor Maya Singer may "find faith" in the "glamour of inclusion rather than exclusivity" pushed by the likes of Vetements and Hood by Air. But is the repackaging of a £4.50 T-shirt as a £185 luxury item really a signifier of "spiritual egalitarianism"? Alexis Housden describes the current situation as "stagnated". "We are in a very strange moment in fashion, as well as socially," he ponders. "I don't think that anyone is really pushing fashion forwards at the moment... but it will certainly come again". With Valentino's most recent collection sparking murmurings of the a-word, could haute couture be set to take back the reigns? Grant-James Povey believes that "the genius behind such houses" drives the avant garde agenda. It "brings to life a story... harmonising key components like the scenes of a play," he rhapsodises.

But will fashion's well-documented commercial 'crisis' soon preclude the luxury of artistry for all but the established behemoths, if not all, full stop? Povey worries that "focusing on fashion as a business... generates sales, but does not inspire the creative mind," whilst Clayton believes her creativity is "appreciated more overseas". As the medium by which each of us is afforded the opportunity to become our own work of art, fashion will always be relevant. But, as the relentless march of social media transforms the industry into a two-way mirror through which designers seek inspiration from consumers and consumers from each other, watched over by hawk-eyed high street buyers, do we still need ant garde designers? Maybe not, but in the absence of the whispers of possibility they bring into our lives - luxury consumers or not - we'd be poorer for their loss.



Red Bustle for Yohji Yamamoto, 1986, ©Nick Knight

Q&A

SPOTLIGHT: GOLD-SMIDT ASSEMBLY

INTERVIEW · ROSHAN LANGLEY

Sissel Fuglsang-Smidt's Luminous Transformation of Space



"They all create exquisite sculptural works, which all are distinct and hold a profound quality together as individually. Its like a symphony where each instrument adds to the total experience."

- SISSEL FUGLSANG-SMIDT

— Since the Middle Ages, artists have used metal to create some of the most beautiful and technically rendered drawings ever made. Interest in the medium peaked during the Renaissance when it was embraced by the likes of Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael. It has since been revived in today's contemporary methods. The concept of combining this medium alongside other familiar materials to create a synergy of dynamic artworks was the root of inspiration behind Danish gallery Gold-Smidt Assembly's newest exhibition, SØLV. The title offers an insight to the scene ahead — 'sølv' meaning 'silver' in Danish, showcases a roster of 8 international artists hand-picked by director and curator, Sissel Fuglsang-Smidt. With an acute eye for detail, an ability to translate art language to viewer experience and a knack for creative teaming, Sissel has created a platform for the future. The latter strength in trait saw the curator joining forces with Creative Director Tupac Martir, who himself had collaborated creatively with and for the likes of Alexander McQueen, Beyoncé, Coachella and Givenchy.

The exhibition's hallmark lies in the diversity of each artist's approach to their individual oeuvres, and though the conceptual strength of each work deserves due diligence, it is Fuglsang-Smidt's personal philosophy on displaying each piece that sparks the flame. The exhibition unveils many examples of the myriad of wonderful things that light can do to metal, and how the use of the former plays a critical role in our perception of the every day.

PREVIOUS PAGE:
CC Series, 2014, Tom Price

RIGHT PAGE: Synthesis, 2014, Tom Price





av Knit. 2015. Stine Jesperse

What would you say is the dynamic visual experience of the exhibition space?

The pop-up format and not being a permanent gallery space add to the dynamic experience of SØLV. The venue, set-design and the unique collaboration with light designer Tupac Martir creates a different and more ambient experience when viewing the works on display. The light design gives it a more intimate feel – engaging the spectator into a different dialogue with the works – between objects, between people, and between people and objects.

Tell us a little about the artists you chose to represent and why?

The artists in the collection consist of eight international artists, Tom Price, Akiko Hoshina, Matthew Chambers, Hilda Hellström, Maria Bang Espersen, Stine Jespersen, Louise Madsen and Manuel Canú. They all know how to extract untapped potential in familiar materials such as gold, textiles, ceramic, metal, anthracite, resin and tar.

They all create exquisite sculptural works, which all are distinct and hold a profound quality together as individually. Its like a symphony where each instrument adds to the total experience. They each also attempt to create expressions where the material itself meets the sensations of sophistication, by translating familiar materials into unexpected dynamic visual experiences. The artists are all at different stages of their careers, which also adds an interesting interplay to the exhibition. The dynamic interplay between the works amplifies the experience of the audience.

Taking into consideration the artists who are currently exhibiting, what kind of art are you looking to exhibit in future?

The artists in the collection are like an ensemble and will be shown together in the next exhibition in Berlin. I am curious and interested in what is happening on the art scene, keeping my eyes open – and I would love to welcome new artist to the collection if the right match is there.

First impressions are always important, has feedback been positive about your new launch?

The feedback has been overwhelming. People have really embraced the exhibition and the gallery format. They've really connected with the alternative and unusual way of displaying the works. It all came together as I had hoped for. We've received great written reviews and a lot of people are showing a great interest in following the gallery's progression, so that's fantastic.

You are based in Copenhagen, is communication difficult to keep things running smoothly?

No, communication is running smooth. I am in contact with the artists and my team whenever needed. I travel a lot both in order to meet with the artists, but also to see and experience new art, culture, architecture to get inspired.

How to you see your new space developing?

Gold-Smidt Assembly differs from a typical gallery by being online-based and being present on various platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook etc. We don't have a permanent location, rather we want to explore the possibilities of the pop-up concept in terms of exhibitions. It gives us the freedom to be present at different places around Europe and to offer a different presentation of the art works in the collection. As a gallery owner and curator I see myself as a catalysts and a sparring partner. I work with a lot of talented people who all add to the total experience. What I seek to do is to create an intriguing experience amongst those viewing the works on display. My ambition is to make a lasting impression despite the short-run time of the exhibition.

What inspired you to make the jump to opening your own space?

Gold-Smidt Assembly was established because I discovered a need to develop ways to offer dynamic, abstract sculptures

and wall-pieces to a broader audience. I have always had a strong interest in contemporary art and culture and I have sought to combine this passion with my entrepreneurial spirit. After I graduated from Goldsmiths College, with a MA in Contemporary Art Theory, I worked as a creative consultant on projects ranging from art exhibitions to design and construction work. The inspiration to set up Gold-Smidt Assembly took form when I relocated to Bali with my husband for six months. I was inspired by the abundance of beautiful sculptures and the pervasive use of different materials to make decorations and carvings that created soothing and stimulating surroundings throughout Bali. The vision came about to translate this artistic language into a contemporary context.

With a strong background in the arts, would you say you are at the peak of your career?

I view it as an ongoing process where I continuously explore new ventures. I like to be open minded and the whole idea of being mobile – a bit like a nomad gallery, speaks to me. I like to test ideas and expand on the notion of curating.

What would you like to do in future, if this is not the end?

I hope to continue this incredible journey. I've been fortunate to work with some of the most gifted and interesting artist and creative people in the industry, so I feel really blessed – so I am very excited to see where it will take us. I will still place particular importance on expressive yet subtle qualities when deciding what sculpture and artist to showcase, identifying art pieces that transform the given material to produce distinct and refined textures. The aim is to give the audience an unexpected visual experience that piques their curiosity.

goldsmidtassembly.com

Fashion Theory

SPOTLIGHT ON

Nordic Fashion: Combining Art & Innovation

WORDS · GRETA BLU

 The Nordic fashion industry is still relatively young. However, since the mid-twentieth century, it has grown at a rapid pace whilst earning worldwide recognition. Its designers leverage their tradition for craftsmanship and use of unconventional materials to stake a unique position on the global market, promoting fashion as a driver of sustainable development. Its designers combine art with innovation, incorporating their artistic heritage with groundbreaking techniques. The fashion and textile industry is one of the largest and most profitable in the world. However, it is also one of most exploitative and polluting, and the cause of multiple challenges faced by contemporary society. To survive, it must change the way it operates by exploring new ways of production. A focus on responsible and positive production is at the heart of the operation of the Nordic fashion industry. Its innovative essence has inspired an impressively diverse range of artists whose avant garde techniques continue to push the boundaries of conventional fashion.

Sandra Backlund and Bea Szenfeld are widely identified as leaders within the movement Incorporating handicraft with technical innovation, the artists' work incorporates both the traditional and the unusual. The ways in which they envision and assemble their designs elevate clothing's significance to that of a wearable, moving art form. Using exaggerated forms and shapes to construct meaning from paper, hair, wood and other exceptional materials, both complement art with innovation, encapsulating the fundamental principle of avant garde design.

Sandra Backlund

"I'm interested in almost every traditional handicraft method. I do experiment a lot with different materials and techniques, but it is through my heavy wool collage knitting that I have found the ultimate way to express myself."

Sandra Backlund is a Swedish fashion designer specialising in sculptural knitwear. Sandra's rich artistic background has enabled her to approach fashion as an artisan. Prior to graduating from Beckham's College of Design in 2004, she had studied Fine Arts, Textile Handicraft and Art History. Profoundly influenced by traditional Swedish craftsmanship techniques, her work is characterised by a unique, confident vision.

Backlund takes a conceptual approach, continuing to work on the design process as she knits. Each piece begins with the human body, the designer meticulously constructing each knitted art work like a sculptor. Backlund plays with the female form, emphasising and exaggerating its shape. She is fascinated by the ways in which the natural silhouette of the body can be highlighted, distorted and transformed by the conscious dressing and undressing of different areas. Whilst her designs exhibit an architecturally and geometrically unique aesthetic, her interest in deconstruction recalls the work of Japanese designers Rei Kawakubo and Yoji Yamamoto.

Backlund's work balances tradition and innovation. Her technical choices convey the intrinsic meaning of her creations, extending their relevance beyond fashion's conventional remit. Her most avant garde pieces have been shown at prestigious global art exhibitions including Hair du Temps, Paper Fashion and Swedish Fashion: Exploring a New Identity.

Backlund's 'In no Time' collection, fashioned from clothes pegs, has been described as the "best of sustainable risk-taking in design". The collection secured her place at Project Città dell'Arte Fashion B.E.S.T. (Bio Ethical Sustainable Trend), celebrating her integration of creative innovation with positive methods of production. Although Backlund is no longer active within the Nordic fashion scene, she deserves to be identified as a groundbreaking artist whose unique vision challenged design as never before.





Bea Szenfeld

PREVIOUS SPREAD:
Perfect Hurts, 2007, Photo by Andreas Kock

RIGHT PAGE:

Made You Look, 2016, Photo by Theresa Marx

"A piece of clothing designed by Bea Szenfeld should be beautiful on the inside as well as on the outside, since she believes one of the most effective methods of communication is through fashion"

Born in Poland and brought up in Sweden, Bea Szenfeld, like Backlund, graduated from Stockholm's Beckham's College of Design. The designer is best known for 'Haute Papier'. Using only scissors and glue, Szenfeld sculpts beautifully robust pieces from the thinnest, most delicate of materials - paper. Outside her main line label, 'Bea Szenfeld', she adapts old clothing and textiles for her secondary line, 'Bea Szenfeld Vintage', and collaborates with artists and designers on numerous external projects. Szenfeld's artistic creations cause us to re-evaluate our conceptions of paper and other materials as disposable. In extending the lives of these elements, she makes sustainability integral to her work.

Backlund and Szenfeld's techniques continue to push boundaries and revolutionise fashion, inspiring the next generation of creatives. Stephan Vidler, Art & Design course leader at Regent's University, London, has seen "a definite shift in how the students desire to approach fashion nowadays. They wish to incorporate innovative materials and advanced techniques into their creations more than ever before. However, it all comes down to accessibility." The Nordic focus on innovation, Vidler tells me, has resulted in a far more advanced level of integration of technology in Swedish schools and universities, enabling students to experiment more.

"A piece of clothing designed by Bea Szenfeld should be beautiful on the inside as well as on the outside, since she believes one of the most effective methods of communication is through fashion."

Saina Koohnavard

"What you see is not what you get."

Saina Koohnavard, one of Sweden's most exciting emerging designers, applies ideas of visual illusion to fashion, experimenting with new fabrics and methods to shift perceptions. Koonhavard graduated from the Swedish School of Textiles in 2015 and now works with emerging brand 'Atacat' whilst teaching at the university. The young artist's latest collection, 'Made You Look', plays with colour, shapes and the ways in which they are perceived. Koonhavard takes inspiration from Gestalt psychology, which conceptualises human perception as an active process: we don't just see the world, we interpret what we see based on what we expect to see. To reflect this idea, she created two-dimensional pieces for three-dimensional bodies from original fabrics varying in transparency and opacity, deceiving our senses. At such an early stage in her career, Koonhavard's groundbreaking vision has already crystallised.

The wealth of inner meaning conveyed by the work of avant garde Nordic creatives elevates it from 'mere' fashion to revolutionary art. Its designers successfully combine a tradition for craftsmanship with the use of experimental techniques to drive more positive sourcing and production methods. As investment in technology continues to increase, Swedish artists and creatives gain unprecedented opportunities with which to develop their craft. We can, then, look forward to the development of ever more extraordinary creations, which will surely see the Nordic fashion industry become a major player on the world stage.



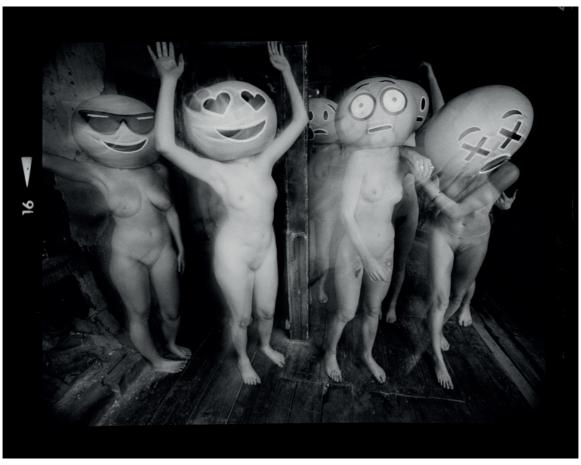
Not-So-Ordinary Madness

How Charlotte Colbert's Surrealist Photo Prisms Divide the Vulnerabilities of the Mind

INTERVIEW · OLIVIA TOPLEY







--- 'If I could tell the story in words, I wouldn't need to lug around a camera' - photographer Lewis Hine once guipped. Language, spoken or signed, is used to convey a message - and where the humble English word fails, imagery finds its strength. In 2015, the Oxford Dictionaries, a global leader in matters of language, selected an emoji as its word of the year - a further testament to the ever complex nature and status of language in our 21st century. This occurrence also surely raised some intriguing questions: is the emoji becoming a substitute for and an invasion of personal expression? Or are we in the midsts of a digital revolution that transcends lingual limitations and cultural differences? Ordinary Madness examines this familiar guery - through a series of black and white photographs, Charlotte Colbert's naked female subjects find their own human countenances replaced with a digital emoticon, playing on the peril of miscommunication.

The genesis of the idea for the show started when the child of one of her friends saw a butterfly on a window and tried to zoom into the creature to try and make it bigger. Herself a new mother to a baby girl, she thought about how technology relates to us on a human level and how it has become as perfunctory as eating and drinking. Colbert explains that she started thinking of civilisation in the developed world as parodies of emoji families, she says, "There's something wonderful about technology but something very dark. We're coming back to a symbolic way of writing but it's someone else's interpretation."

Using props, distorting mirrors, costumes as well as long and double exposures, Colbert creates a surreal parody of daily life as seen through twenty-first century language. Nude figures unable to connect, couples frozen in a forced state of feeling, a surreal army of circuit board women, an emoji wasteland where madness, fantasy, comedy and chaos coexist.

What are the advantages to using film as an artistic tool? Why do you choose film rather than other mediums?

I love stories and explore them through both narrative films and photography. I am passionate about both. They feed into each other, one inspiring the other or starting a questioning which can be further investigated in either medium. As a film director, the seeing and taking of photographs has influenced my aesthetic one being the continuation of the other, both existing within my same world.

What is the effect of using black and white imagery throughout your films? What does the lack of colour reveal about you as an artist?

It is said that babies when they are just born see the world in black and white. Perhaps unconsciously I am striving towards that kind of immediacy with the world? It also probably allows for me to have a distance with the work, where I feel I can see it more clearly because through its color it is somehow separate from me.

Do you believe anybody can be a filmmaker?

I believe anybody can do anything.

Does being a female filmmaker influence your work? Does it give you a niche when promoting your work?

Being a female is one of the elements that makes up my identity and as such I am sure it influences how I perceive the world but it seems to me that what we tend to identify as feminine and masculine qualities can be found in either sex. For example Kathryn Bigelow's films feel perhaps more "masculine" than Krzysztof Kieslowski's.

Who do you turn to for inspiration? Do you unconsciously emulate their work?

Being a writer, a filmmaker or artist sometimes feels to me like being a squirrel. Collecting lots of emotions, images, stories from a night out, a visit to a museum, a train ride, a misfortune, an encounter, an eavesdropped conversation – letting it brew for sometimes years and then the strangest formations come out. Digested snippets of one's experience.

Why does your work have strong surrealist themes? How do you think it makes your viewer feel?

I love random things in places where you don't expect them. It surprises me, makes me laugh and makes me question. Absurdity captures a sense of irreverence and provocation at the way things are. Surrealism as a movement poked fun at the boundaries of "normality" and the accepted state of being while at the same time connecting itself to the tradition of psychoanalysis. Dreams, the mind, emotions sending us coded messages. Bottles at sea from the world beyond perception.

Is disturbing your viewer your main aim when creating a film? Does it give you a sense of power to influence/alter perceptions of art?

In making a film my aim is to tell a story and from that generating some kind of response, an emotion, a peek into a world... I don't really think of what response my work will generate. I just tend to do it and then bite my nails.

Do you recognise yourself as a storyteller? How do you define this term?

I think humans as a species are storytellers. It's the only way we know how to live, make sense of the world around us, our identities, our family – every link we have with the world is only always a fiction, a narrative we tell ourselves.

What are some of your central characters in your work and what do they represent?

I'm not sure... There are probably some recurring themes and figures... I feel very in the middle of them to be able to really articulate who they are... perhaps they are often lost and disconnected figures...

Do you feel threatened by the smartphone generation where anyone can create a film? Does this detract from the art of creating a story?

It's great that everyone tells stories. That seems to me to be one of the really positive aspects of Smartphones. Am more worried in Smartphones making us feel increasing lost, confused and exhausted by keeping us in a constant state of copresence between the 3D, physical, world and the



"It's great that everyone tells stories.

That seems to me to be one of the really positive aspects of Smartphones."

- CHARLOTTE COLBERT

Some films –even if you look on YouTube or Reddit – are so unbelievably personal - it's amazing they even exist.

They are fascinating. So intimate.

- CHARLOTTE COLBERT



How do you come up with ideas for your films? Do you believe an idea can ever be original? How does this influence you as an artist?

It is said there are only 7 basic plots and all stories are always ever a re-telling of these original archetypal stories. There is something beautifully connecting about that. That all creeds, times and places share the same fears, desires, hopes, loves that are simply essentially human.

Which is better organic art or constructed art?

I don't know if there is such a difference. Art seems in part constructed and in part organic.

How do you feel when you receive such positive feedback from your work? Does this put pressure on your to create similar films?

I still have a long way to go to be under that kind of pressure!

Can artistic films ever be wholly personal or will they always be for viewers and spectators?

Some films -even if you look on YouTube or Reddit - are so unbelievably personal - it's amazing they even exist. They are fascinating. So intimate. So voyeuristic. Cinema has always been that secret peephole where the viewer can see into someone else's personal space. They exist for each other.

How long do you spend planning for a film? Which portion of the film making process is most important to you? (e.g. planning, production, post)

With narrative film or photography it seems there is never enough time to shoot. So careful planning is the only way I can get what I want or at least some of what I want in the can

How do your films explore philosophical themes? Can film ever answer questions about meaning?

They don't explicitly strive to do so but I guess some universal themes creep into every specific story.

Can surrealism ever be delicate? How do these seemingly contradictory concepts exist side by side effectively?

I'd never thought of surrealism as un-delicate. I suppose if one thinks of surrealism as a hippo in a tutu it could be considered un-delicate but even then, thinking of Fantasia, I don't know if I'd agree. Surrealism is the essence of dreams and what could be more delicate than that.

What three words would you use to describe your work?

Surreal, dark, absurd.

What are your views on surrealism being easier to create compared to naturalism?

They are equally tricky. Fiction is an artifice so whether one wants to make it look "natural" or "artificial" it always requires more work than one would anticipate.

What does the future hold for you as an artist? What is your ambition for your filmmaking career?

Hopefully to make lots more films!

What is more important; the story or the equipment used to create the story? Can a good story be made on a shoestring budget?

The story. Of course. Homer could be told with toilet rolls.

What advice would you give to budding filmmakers?

Make films.

Ordinary Madness opens July 1st at the Gazelli Art House, London. Charlotte Colbert's work will also feature as part of the multi-discplinary group-show 'Daydreaming with Stanley Kubrick' from June 30th at Somerset House.

9 Mus Exhib This S

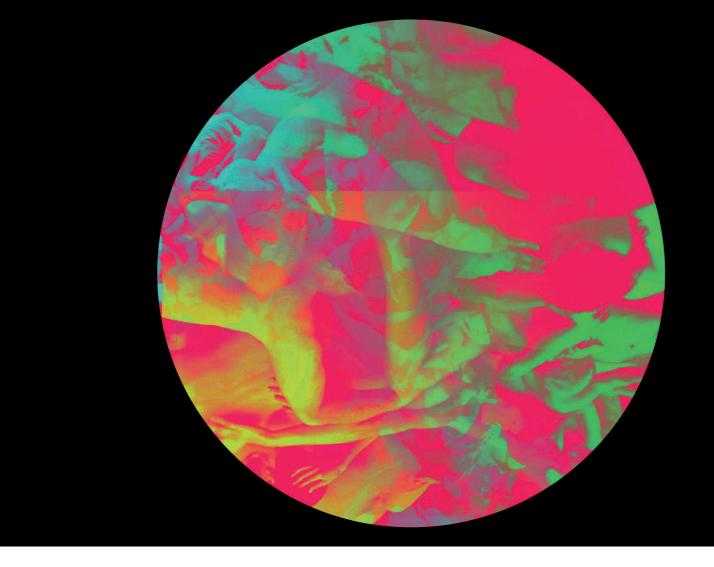
Features Edit:

Laura Frances Green

st See itions eason Organising Anew (c.1921), prominent member of the European avant-garde Luibov Popova presented a pioneering manifesto, declaring 'breaking with the past' the means by which to achieve authentic artistic innovation. Despite acknowledging artistic radicalisation's debt to previous traditions, Popova claimed a 'new organisation' of these constant traditions to be the key to unleashing a progressive revolution.

Concurrent with Popova's manifesto, artists and exhibitions witnessed a wealth of modernisation, reconfiguring the aesthetic traditions of the past with new concepts and approaches. the Suprematists championed abstraction based on creative emotion in the groundbreaking Last Futurist Exhibition of Paintings 0.10, whilst Dada embraced Anti-Art, creating politically charged readymades and photomontages.

Looking to the avant-garde of today, we present nine exhibitions which contrastively embody a reconfiguration of the past in their organisation of the new.



Blood for Light: Nastivicious Waterside Contemporary 3 June — 6 August

Anarchic and brilliantly disruptive, Blood for Light will see Nastivicious interrogate solipsistic critical practices and human frivolity through a series of high octane video instillations. These instillations will fuse music and uptempo visuals with narrative voice overs in a style which references mass distribution of content within popular culture today. Fuck Identity presents the tantalisingly tangible

as vanguard; bodily fluids such as blood remind us of our own corporeality, and of our instincts which are often compromised by conscious reasoning. Nastivicious are a collaborative duo who have been working together since 2010, comprised of Nástio Mosquito and Vic Pereiró, the former having garnered the Future Generation Art Prize in 2014.

THIS PAGE:

2. Georgia O'Keeffe, Abstraction White Rose 1927. © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

RIGHT PAGE:

 Courtesy Antony Gormley and Alan Cristea Gallery, London.

2.

Georgia O'Keeffe *Tate Modern*6 July — 30 October

Presenting the first retrospective of works by Georgia O'Keeffe (1887- 1986) in the UK in over 20 years, this is a remarkable opportunity to become more aquatinted with one of the pioneers at the forefront of American Modernism. With over 100 works on display and ranging over six decades, this exhibition simultaneously explores recurring themes within O'Keefe's work, such as the study of nature, whilst outlining her versatility. A trailblazer, O'Keeffe championed modernist photography, using it as inspiration for her infamous abstract flower paintings such as Jimson Weed/ White Flower No. 1 (1932), a groundbreaking piece which promises to be a highlight of the exhibition.



3.

Antony Gormley: Cast Alan Cristea Gallery 13 May — 2 July

Following the minimalist sculpture series Expansion Field (2014), renowned British sculptor Antony Gormley continues to explore the phenomenological relationship of the human body within space and time in Cast. Taking control of both galleries, Gormley has installed a series of Woodblocks, architecturally reconfigured representations of the human body, and Body Prints, impressions of Gormley's own body in crude oil and petroleum jelly, alongside smaller aquatints and linear etchings. Cast encourages the audience to ponder their being as restricted in relation to the environment they inhabit; at almost three metres in height the Woodblocks present an architecture of ephemeral beings one must almost navigate, whilst the use of crude oil in the Body Prints delineates our dependency on the earth.



Pablo Bronstein: Historical Dances in an Antique Setting Tate Britain 26 April — 9 October

British artist Pablo Bronstein delivers a spellbinding spectacle of immersive live performance in the latest of Tate Britain's commissions, surveying an amalgamation of historical dance and architecture. This site-specific work encapsulates a response to the imposing neo-classical Duveen galleries at Tate Britain's core; three dancers will move throughout the expansive space along geometric floor plans, interacting with the architecture through a performance of choreographed routines and poses which fuse modern voguing with 17th Century Baroque dance. In a nod to the very drawings which provide the inspiration for his performative works, Bronstein has designed and erected two walls at the northern and southern ends of the galleries which invert the exterior by reimagining the Clore gallery extension and the Milbank façade.

Keith Sonnier: Light Works Whitechapel Gallery 10 June – 11 September

Light Works exhibits a reconfiguration of four of Keith Sonnier's (b.1941) iconic early neon sculptures of the late 60's and early 70's, works which made a radical break from the conventional confines of sculptural practice. Sonnier challenged preconceived notions of sculpture through experimentation with industrial and

ephemeral materials, eventually turning to glass tubing enclosed neon to construct post-minimalist sculptural works. Utilising the linear quality of neon, Sonnier reinvented a material previously associated with planar signage, creating sculptural drawings which erupt into the audience's realm and illuminate their surroundings.



A Kingdom of Hours Gasworks 23 June — 4 September

Taking its title from Fernando Pessoa's The Book of Disquiet, the astutely conceptual A Kingdom of Hours will showcase an elaborate collaboration between a group of artists including Osías Yanov and Wilson Diaz. Working in sculpture, textile, video and numerous other disparate media, each artist takes as their point of reference Elizabeth Freeman's writings on 'chrononormativity', the internalised rhythms within societies, and 'erotohistoriography', a study of history embedded within desire. This focus culminates in a series of intriguing works which each seek to demystify conventional chronologies and their effect on social and sexual prejudices existing within contemporary patriarchy.

7.

Francesca Pasquali: Metamorphosis Tornabuoni Art London 29 June — 17 September

In a first of a series of solo shows throughout summer focusing on emerging artists, Tornabuoni presents the first solo show of Francesca Pasquali's work in London, exhibiting site-specific interactive instillations which mimic the mutative textures found within nature. Intricate, tactile and playful, Pasquali's approach draws influence from the Art Povera movement, challenging the commercialisation of art by repurposing everyday objects, such as elastic bands and drinking straws. The acme is surely ScopaMi, an instillation where black plastic broom bristles compactly cover the floor, inviting the audience to touch its surface. The dual meaning of the work's title, a phrase referring to both the act of copulation and of brushing a floor, highlights the tongue-in-cheek nature of Pasquale's work.

LEFT PAGE

^{5.} Keith Sonnier. Ba-O- Ba VI, 1970. Courtesy of the Artist and Haeusler Contemporary Munich/Zurich. Balance Contemporary Munich/Zurich





Richard Höglund Ranchini Gallery 29 June — 28 August

Taking its title from Fernando Pessoa's The Book of Disquiet, the astutely conceptual A Kingdom of Hours will showcase an elaborate collaboration between a group of artists including Osías Yanov and Wilson Diaz. Working in sculpture, textile, video and numerous other disparate media, each artist takes as their point of reference Elizabeth Freeman's writings on 'chrononormativity', the internalised rhythms within societies, and 'erotohistoriography', a study of history embedded within desire. This focus culminates in a series of intriguing works which each seek to demystify conventional chronologies and their effect on social and sexual prejudices existing within contemporary patriarchy.

9.

States of Mind. Tracing the Edges of Consciousness Wellcome Collection 4 February - 16 October

Innovative and profoundly poignant, States of Mind: Tracing the Edges of Consciousness takes as its standpoint a question which plagues the human condition: what is consciousness? Divided into a series of subsections, from Science and Soul to Language and Memory, and featuring a changing programme of instillations by artists including Kerry Tribe and Shona Illingworth, this exhibition examines the theories of artists, psychologists, philosophers and neuroscientists surrounding the nature of consciousness.

LEFT PAGE:
9. Ann Veronica Janssens, yellowbluepink

THIS PAGE:

8. Richard Höglund, Sea Picture

RIGHT PAGE:
The Key in the Hand, 2015, Japan Pavilion at 56th
Venice Biennale (Italy), Photo by Sunhi Mang

The Universe Inside A Visionary Mind

In Conversation withChiharu Shiota on ThreadingTogether the Stories of the World

INTERVIEW · ROSS ALEXANDER MASON





what is art today? It's a strange question, no one knows, no one can answer, but it's always important to keep asking: What is the direction to make art? What is purpose? Why do we need art? Chirharu Shiota's works answer many of these questions. The artist herself is a pleasant, charming and insightful woman to talk to; full of scintillating stories, she is very engaged and passionate about her work. Shiota is a Japanese-born multidisciplinary installation artist, currently taking residence in Berlin. Most famous for here magnificent webs of yarn that weave and connect the concepts of her work together. Her creations hold elements of installation and performance art which whispers and echoes the stories from different people and cultures across the world. I was invited to sit down with Shiota to discuss her process and approach to her creative storytelling.



After the Dream, 2013, Carré St. Anne, Montpellier (France) Photo by Pierre Schwartz

ABOVE:
Conscious Sleep, 2016, 20th Biennale of Sydney (Australia)
Photo by Paul Green

As a young person, what was your preferred style of artistic-creation and how has this changed today?

In Japan, I lived in a house in the countryside surrounded by nature. I began connecting myself [to nature] when I spread some stones and flowers around in various places. I didn't really have a favourite style of artistic creation, I simply began drawing and interacting with nature. I have a universe inside of me, in this body, and there also a universe outside, nature's universe. Something connects [it] together, it's a different type of universe and that is the universe of my art-work.

Where do you believe that your keen interest to explore an individual's story comes from? (Pertaining to: Dialogue from DNA, 2004)

So I had a pair of shoes ... I came back to Japan one day and when I wore my shoes; they were the same size as before but they did not fit. My feet were also

the same size but they did not fit. I felt like I'd become a different person. I had a story about my shoes [to tell], and I wanted to collect the stories of many people; children's, sports persons, piano players or a even persons wedding shoes [and tell them too]. There was someone in a wheelchair who wanted to walk, that's why he bought the shoes. But he couldn't walk, the shoes were brand new so he wanted to send them to me. There was also someone who was in hospital, this had person died and their shoes were left so his wife wanted to send the shoes to me.

There are so many stories, it comes together like a picture. The strings [I use] connect these stories together. Whenever I receive a personal object from someone I don't know, I feel as if I'm starting to get to know them in depth, whether it's a letter, a pair of shoes, keys or a suitcase. There's a personal approach attached to them which catches my attention.





Performance view of During Sleep, 2002, Kunstmuseum Luzern(Switzerland) Photo by Sunhi Mang, PREVIOUS SPREAD:
The Key in the Hand, 2015, Japan Pavilion at 56th
Venice Biennale (Italy) Photo by Sunhi Mang

Would you consider the process of installing and uninstalling your work a large part of the key concept? How does this process make you feel?

I always bring the materials to the space, and I start working as if I were in my studio, so the vision usually changes through the installation process. As I am installing, my feelings and thoughts develop a shape and a sense of being. As for uninstalling, these conveyed feelings become memories. I begin from scratch when installing and return to nothing again when I have to bring the installation down - so it is like a cycle. Sometimes in the beginning I don't know why I am actually creating a certain piece of work but when I am done I can always recover that initial feeling [of why]. The concept doesn't exactly change during the process but it gains more meaning as go on discovering. Sometimes I think that it doesn't matter how much space I have, but rather that it remains faithful to my creative feelings.

How do you feel that the transition from living in Japan to moving to Berlin effected your work?

Berlin has been changing a lot since I arrived. It is an everlasting moving city. It changes fast and it's in constant movement, resulting in my own inspiration. Compared to London, Berlin is very slow and sleepy but there is freedom, it is very free here.

From your experience, have you ever noticed a change in the reception of your work from exhibiting worldwide?

Yes. Depending on where I show my work, the reception is different. For instance, when I exhibited in Brazil, people wrote thank-you letters to God and the Universe, whereas in other countries they thanked mainly their loved ones.

When I present my work in Europe people are more aware of my nationality but I prefer to leave that aside and focus on who I am as an artist. It is exactly the same whether I exhibit in Europe or Japan because I am just making art. It is only when I am away from my hometown that I have a stronger, more solid feeling of my cultural background only because of how people see me. Searching for this identity actually helps me create. It makes me think of each human being and their background.

You've previously stated that art is something that spans across all cultures, this feeling of togetherness is apparent in all work you produce. But how do you explore this?

I understand art as a universal language. It more about communicating from soul to soul rather than culture to culture. I want to connect with human beings.

I connect individual feelings and memories which results in a unique mind-set of human relationships linked together. I accumulate personal an individual experiences and bring them together through my threads.

What have you learned on your journey as an artist?

Believe in myself and stay my way.



"The Only Way I Can Convey Emotion is Though my Body." — Polly Penrose

INTERVIEW · LAURA FRANCES GREEN

The Anatomy of a Woman As Subject & Medium







Freshly disturbed dust at the base of a fireplace, blossoming bruises, and dirtied feet; subtle hints to the debilitating process of Polly Penrose's enthralling self-portraits reveal themselves. Inventive and determined, Penrose's serendipitous practice presents her body's response to abandoned environments and objects, organically collating a conversation between herself and a space which sees the forgotten become fleetingly reanimated.

Entertaining themes of temporality, Penrose's photographs speak not only of the decay of neglected buildings and the story behind each shoot, but of moments within her life. Whilst generally unmediated, each self portrait becomes a documentation of Penrose's concurrent emotional state, almost like diary entries, rendered through her body language and interaction with space.



How did you come to use yourself as subject matter within your work?

I was taking pictures in my stepfather's factory, I'd always loved all the colour and shape of the machines in there. As I was taking the pictures I thought how wonderful it would be to photograph a nude against all the hard angles and textures – and I was the only human form available. It was a challenge to not make a very obvious 'feminine form in a masculine environment' picture that we've all seen before. I had to be inventive and thus a project was born.

In your self-portraits your face is habitually hidden; how do you convey your identity and emotion in each photograph?

I think that the body can convey a vast amount of emotion, and we are very capable of reading it, but put a face and therefore a facial expression into a picture and it will always become the main form of communication. By taking that opportunity away, the only way I can convey emotion is though my body, its position and its relationship to the space that I'm shooting in. Also, my pictures are about form as well as emotion, by having no face in the pictures, I like that my body is a shape, an object - like everything else in the image.

Series such as 'Can You See Me' and 'A Body of Work' see you position yourself within varying internal and external environments. How do you come to the decision to choose these locations?

I have to be open-minded with locations. I have two small children, little time to scout and have always been dependent on word of mouth, luck, and taking any opportunities that come my way. I love the challenge that this presents, having to make a picture from somewhere that if you had all the time and money in the world, you probably wouldn't look at twice. I have shot in squats with pigeons flapping about, in my parents garden, in artists studios, relation's houses, houses I've driven past and put notes through the door, friend's offices, holiday homes – anywhere with space and light and preferably run down with a few secrets in the walls.

More recently I have been finding locations through estate agents, which allows me to have a bit more control and although it's pretty intensive time-wise and often ends in heartbreak.. I have found the most achingly beautiful, magical (in my eyes) locations this way. I love these places because they have often been lived in for decades by the same family, and all the stories they have housed over those years, joyful or solemn are tangible. I also feel incredibly sad that they are are on the brink of being gutted and all of that history will be somehow taken away in the wallpaper and the curtains and cupboards.. I feel like taking pictures in these ghost homes is my love letter to them.

Can you describe the process you put your body through to bring each image to fruition?

Each picture is hard work.. and getting more so as time passes! I shoot on a self timer so each pose has to be found, then perfected and as I check the camera between every shot and then go back into the pose it's very repetitive and sometimes quite brutal. When I have found the skeleton of the shot, then it's a matter of getting each part of my body absolutely right, as I look at the picture I think, that's good but I need to be more of a curve, or I need to point that toe, stretch the line of my arm longer and bit by bit I get there. It takes around 50 or 60 images on average, which can be quite gruelling when you're clinging on to the edge of a fireplace.

The images you create from this process, especially those in the 'Body of Work' series, seem to convey a juxtaposition of vulnerability and empowerment. What emotions do you experience whilst making a work?

Definitely both of those! Being naked and alone in an unfamiliar, often quite eerie place is about as vulnerable as you can be, especially as a woman, so there is definitely a healthy dose of fear. When I start shooting the fear is channelled into finding the picture and the energy to climb up cupboards or endure the pain that some poses demand. Once I'm settled into shooting the process is almost trance-like and I feel incredibly calm, peaceful and powerful. I love the connection I feel with the space and my own body, it's hugely satisfying and nourishing. When I leave I feel sadness that my time with the space is over but that I feel delighted to have danced with it and taken a record of my time there away with me.

LEFT PAGE

John Campbell Road, Red Curtains. Sept 2014, ©Polly Penrose



In both the 'I Was Never Good at Yoga' and 'Pool Party' series, you present the viewer with a enrapt dialogue between your body and an object: how and why do you come to choose the objects you engage with in these series?

All my pictures are a spontaneous response to a space and it's contents, but until "I was Never Good at Yoga" they were all singular images making up a chronological series. I didn't know the space was used for yoga until I was in the process of 'finding' the shot, opened a cupboard and found it was full of yoga equipment, such beautiful textures and colours. It just made sense that I had to make as many pictures as I could with as many of these objects as I could. Some worked some didn't. It was the same with "Pool Party" it's a very organic process – but you know that an orange lily against white skin and a monochrome background has the possibility of visual delight! – as do rubber rings and blue hosepipes! I wish I had time for more.

As the process to create a photograph is so laborious, how do you envisage your work changing in the future as your body ages?

I'm genuinely fascinated to find out! I can't imagine I'll have the energy or strength to take the pictures I take now in 20 years time, or in five years time for that matter! People have written how my pictures document my body changing, but it has only just, after a decade of shooting and having two children, become in my opinion, an interesting element to my work. It will become more so and that excites me, but I don't want A Body of Work to be purely about the ageing process. I always want that to be a byproduct of the project, not it's purpose. I will have to find a way of keeping the pictures challenging and interesting. I don't know how – but I'm sure I'll find a way.

What did you learn about photography from working with Tim Walker? In turn, what would you consider vital advice to accord upon aspiring photographers and artists in general?

Tim taught me to photograph what you believe in, not what you think other people want to see. Above all, it must be for yourself or your vision and artistic clarity becomes muddied. Also to make things happen, it's so easy to procrastinate, to find or even create reasons that things can't happen. Tim never does that, he's only interested in making things happen, creating opportunities in his quiet capable way. That's the biggest lesson I learned from him and the soundest advice I would pass on.



LEFT PAGE: Crowborough Road, Satin Curtain, Oct 2015, ©Polly Penrose

THIS PAGE:
I Was Never Good At Yoga, Exercise Balls,
May 2015, ©Polly Penrose

Q&A

(Re)Staging of the Muse: A Man's Perspective on Feminist Art

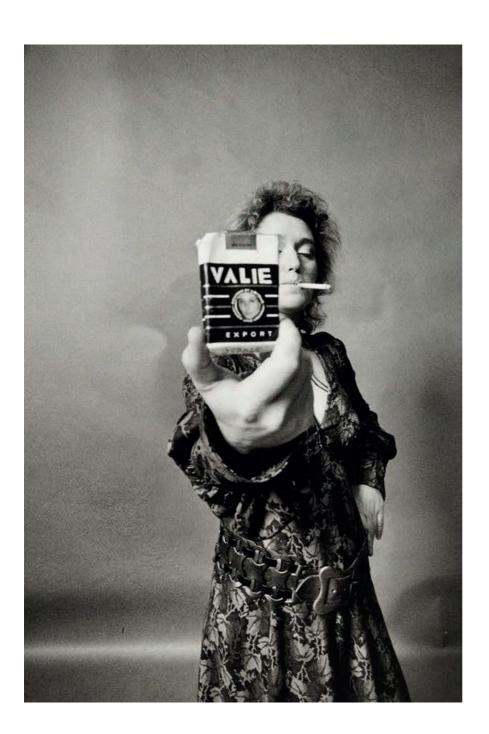
INTERVIEW · CONSTANCE VICTORY

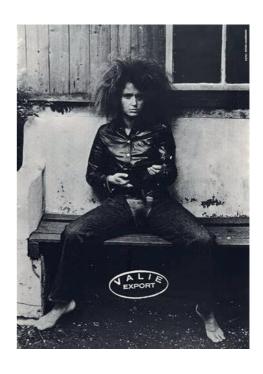












PREVIOUS PAGE:

Le Secret, 1976, Courtesy Richard Saltoun Gallery, ©Helena Almeida

ABOVE:

Genitalpanik, 1969, Courtesy Richard Saltoun Gallery, ©Valie Export

LEFT

SMART EXPORT - Self-Portrait with Cigarette Kit, 1968:1970, Courtesy Richard Saltoun Gallery, ©Valie Export

RIGHT PAGE

Image;woman;text,1979, Courtesy Richard Saltoun Gallery, ©Marie Yates

The pre-eminence of the Richard Saltoun Gallery is not exclusive to its penchant for promoting Post-War art, but extends to the gallery's unparalleled emphasis on the timeliness and timelessness of 1970's feminist and conceptual art. By reintroducing and representing the exceptional works from the likes of Renate Bertlmann, Gina Pane, Jo Spence and Marie Yates, Saltoun has single-handedly elevated the relevancy of contemporary art history within modern discourse.

Post Frieze New York art fair, I sat down with the ingenious gallerist to reflect on the evolution of feminist art, and the movement itself as an abstract mothership and muse within conceptual art.





Pintura Habitada, 1976, Col. Módulo, Lisbon, Courtesy Helena Almeida

Mr. Saltoun, what inspired your gallery's singular interest in reintroducing conceptual and feminist works of the past, as opposed to contemporary compositions within this sector of art production?

While a student at the Courtauld I developed a strong interest in conceptual, feminist and performance art from the 70s and 80s. My personal interests have certainly influenced the gallery's programme, I believe that a revaluation of these overlooked artistic practices will encourage contemporary generations of artists to engage with similar aesthetics and politics.

Has the feminist art movement reached its zenith, as far as novelty and inventiveness of subject matter and material choices? Do you believe that this generation of artists produce with the same level of inventiveness, and emotional resourcefulness that artists from 1960's and 70's did?

Yes, the engagement of yesterday is as strong today. Art with a feminist content is even more prominent today because of a stronger emphasis on feminist art history and feminist theories in academia, as well as more distribution channels available to emerging artists. The ability to access and view historical works by feminist artists in books, museums, and through the internet has definitely inspired younger generations.

What do you find to be most intriguing about the contemporary audience's engagement with 1970's feminist art?

It is very intriguing how contemporary audiences are able to relate historical works to their present circumstances. It is fascinating how many contemporary artists re-appropriate and re-enact performances or artworks from previous generations, as the project re.act.feminism (2011-2013) did, featuring among others, works by Helen Chadwick, Helena Almeida, Françoise Janicot and Renate Bertlmann.

Are you at all confounded by this engagement?

I am delighted to notice this contemporary engagement and I believe it will continue.

Reintroductions" are facilitated when a "reminder" is necessary. Which founding principles of 1970's conceptual and feminist art would most serve contemporary feminist artists in the creative process?

We cannot talk of "founding principles" in conceptual and feminist art productions as each case is in fact specific to its cultural and social environment. As artists did not have adequate institutional support or financial support from the market, they developed new artist-run organisations and exhibitions to promote each others' work. For example, VALIE EXPORT organised a ground-breaking exhibition called Magna in 1975, featuring feminist artists of the period.

Feminist artists often include unconventional media, incorporating fabric, fibre, performance, and video installation as these materials did not hold the same conventionally male-dominated criterion that painting and sculpture had. How crucial was feminist expression to the evolution of multi-media art within the last 40 years?

Female artists explored less conventional techniques, such as new media, video and performance as a way to develop their own territories in the arts. Helen Chadwick used for example chocolate, fur, video, and performance; whereas Renate Bertlmann utilised latex, sex toys, and blades in her works; Shelagh Wakely, used fruit, spices and other ephemeral materials in her installations. Other artists, such as Jo Spence, are instead pioneers in photography for their unique aesthetic and political use of the camera.

Feminism has been identified as "the most influential international movement of any during the postwar period." (As said by Jeremy Strick, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Washington Post 2007.) Does the impact of feminism on contemporary culture parallel the impression that has been left by the movement within the landscape of contemporary art?

The influence of feminism is undeniable, both on a social and an artistic level, and art and activism have been in strong dialogue with each other: from today's sensational Pussy Riot performances to the photographic portrayals of women at work made by the Hackney Flashers collective during the 70s in London.





Is there a particular city or geographic location/ market that you believe is most welcoming to the reintroduction of conceptual and feminist art of the 1970's?

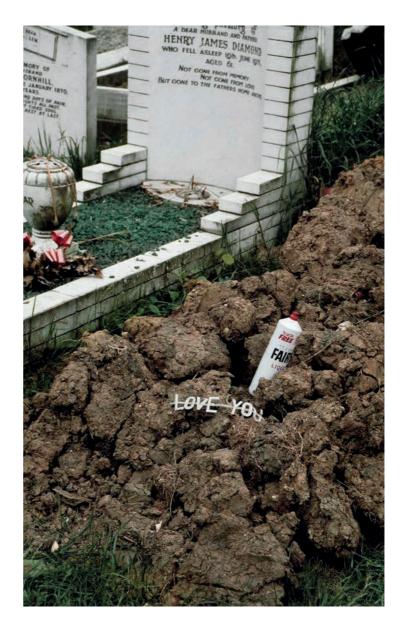
I believe that Western European and North American markets have been ready for quite a few years now for reintroducing feminist and conceptual art. Artists suc ad a great success in cities like London and New York during Frieze, and body art from the 70s has been a great success in this year's Miart fair in Milan, as well as in ARCO Madrid.

Have the hope(s) that you've harboured in reintroducing these colossal works been achieved in the way that you desire?

Definitely, yes. But the challenge is on-going as the artistic resources from the 60s, 70s and 80s are immense. It will always be in the gallery's interest to reintroduce artists who have unfortunately been forgotten or ignored but that have nevertheless left an important mark in the arts, culture and society.

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Contemporaneous with the release of Issue 10, Richard Saltoun Gallery is exhibiting the works of conceptual artist and lecturer, Marie Yates. Yates gained prominence in the 1960's for her painting and sculptural works and over time, the range of her repertoire has extended to include projection and installation projects that explore concerns of representation, signification and sex difference.



PREVIOUS PAGE:

Tender Touches, 1976, Courtesy Relate Bertlmann

THIS PAGE

The Final Project, 1991 - 1992,

Courtesy Richard Saltoun Gallery, ©Jo Spence

RIGHT PAGE

The Final Project, 1991 - 1992,

Courtesy Richard Saltoun Gallery, ©Jo Spence



The Godfather of Street Art

Ernest Pignon-Ernest
on The Purpose of Disrupting
the Everday, the Growth of
Appropriation and How Emotion
Transcends the Ephemeral

WORDS · TAMARA ACKAY





Ernest Pignon-Ernest, PASOLINI. 40 years after his assassination. Collages in Rome, Ostia, Naples, Matera, May / June 2015



Ernest Pignon-Ernest is a multifaceted artist. Committed and politically passionate about his art, he blends each drawing to a location; each location meticulously defining his voice. His silkscreen prints can be interpreted as in-situ instillations, appearing on the walls of cities around the world staged in site specific public.

Painter, street artist, designer, performer, photographer and collage artist, Pignon-Ernest works without any outside help or assistance. For 50 years, he has initiated a dialogue using the street as his canvas and the passers-by as his audience. A pioneer of street-art, he inscribes a part of himself into the drawings on the streets' walls and admirably accepts their inevitable dissolution.

The artist was born in 1942 in Nice, France. The expulsion from his own home in Nice as a child would stay engraved in his memory and would later reappear in his work as a strong motif. His drawing talents were revealed while he started working for an architect in 1957 and were put to use when he began to draw with walnut stain while in Algeria during 1961-1962 for the war.

Ernest Pignon-Ernest started to tackle large format paintings in 1966 and also worked in the theatre industry which allowed him to learn and expand his knowledge of stage setting. As an active member of the French Communist Party, his political engagement grew considerably when he became one of the founders, in 1977, of the National Union of Plastic Artists CGT. Sensitive to injustice, he often addresses topics such as abortion (Tours, Nice, Paris, 1975) expulsion (Paris, 1979) and AIDS (Soweto, 2002). Since 1966 he has been exhibiting new works each year during solo exhibitions in the street and across museum in Europe.

Before even considering to draw, Ernest Pignon-Ernest has noted a need to feel and experience the upcoming location he is planning to utilise for his art. He examines light, space, wall textures, and anything that is not visible or palpable. The history of the location and its memory speak directly to the artist as he immerses himself in each symbol and past emotion. The soft whispers of the walls influence each creation and the reality of life composes the lines of the drawings. Themes such as an abandoned suburb, a social group, a poet or the death of an icon actively come into play in Ernest Pignon-Ernest's vision.

The artist thinks, imagines and invents knowing that his creations are ephemeral. It will eventually disappear over time in the city's decay or due to the anger of passersby. The soiling and degrading his works, however, cannot erase his purpose. Rather, all that is expressed around the drawings and collages, negative or positive, helps to capture an idea, a perception, and to unleash a memory.

The shadows of Ernest Pignon-Ernest, poised and meaningful, meet the eyes of strangers, catching them off guard. We are caught short, left with our raw emotions and our primal instincts. This is the exact purpose of the artist, to seek the emotion of the moment when facing a disrupting and an uncommon scenario.

One of the artist's latest silkscreen represents the controverted Pasolini arising out of nowhere, alive, holding in his arms his own dead body. Ernest Pignon-Ernest selected the walls of the house where the poet and director lived in Rome, not far from the spot where he was murdered. It is a palpable manifestation of the artist's engagement with a poetic reflection prompted by a spontaneous expression of our deep sensitivity.





In Conversation with Ernest Pignon Ernest

Are you an artist, a street artist, a drawing artist, or a performer?

I think I'm all four... and I don't have any assistant: therefore, I'm also a photographer and I apply them onto the walls myself.

How did you gauge the public's reaction facing your art then?

I wasn't gauging at the time...nor I am gauging nowadays either. I was making things that seemed necessary to me and for my relationship with others, for my pleasure...having an impact or not was not the point...I wasn't conducting market research!

What is your opinion on nowadays street art?

Isn't street art only existing in the present-day? My first installations are from 1966!!!! Fifty years! It seems like an English word had to be invented for people to become aware of this "movement" which is now perceived as a trend... I think there are only 5-10% inventive creations and interesting reflections on urbanism. The other 90% is of people creating in the air, spoiled children deprived of common sense and political values.

Would you have wanted street art to evolve differently?

I can't kid myself...if 5% of what's out there is innovative, then that's fine.

Do you feel like a live performer when installing your pieces in the streets?

Exactly...what I am suggesting is a plastic intervention within the real and its symbolic, mythological, sacred, anthropological and political relatable consequences.

Do you fantasise on your drawings prior to creating them?

It's more than a fantasy. While starting the process, I am aware of the location where I will set the drawing. I have thought through anything visible: space, light, the wall texture, the encounter...anything that can be seen and at the same time I've studied anything that can't: the memory of the location, its history, its symbolic value...my drawing comes from all that. It must solve any installation-related issues and unveil the meaning or the emotions of the inscription. The goal is to work on the location itself: to make a material space and simultaneously bring its evocative potential to the forefront ...disrupt the location, reveal it and disturb it.

PREVIOUS SPREAD:

Ernest Pignon-Ernest, Prison Saint Paul, Lyon 2012 Photo by Fabrice Gibert. Courtesy Galerie Lelong

BELOW:

Sur L'Avortement, 1975. Courtesy Galerie Lelong







Which scenarios inspire you?

Life. Life in a suburb, life of a particular social group, life and the art of a poet...sometimes even his death is inspiring, see my last group of artworks on Pasolini.

What do you feel when you discover that your work has been torn and wrecked?

The inevitable death of my artworks is one of the suggested elements that is as important as what's represented. To know in advance that an image won't last forever plays a role in the perception of this same image. I'm comfortable with anything that's ephemeral... a lot of my images only make sense at a given time and moment. In Naples, I was pasting my images on the theme of death only on the night of Good Friday.

What I find upsetting nowadays with the trend of "street art" is the greed and stupidity of those who are trying to take away the images, the morons who don't understand that this "art" can only exist in a given situation. To take them away from their context means misunderstanding their intention... individualistic and speculative mindsets which negates what should be a genuine "art of the street".

Do you have the passers-by's emotional consequences in mind prior to choosing a location or drawing a piece?

My installations include people that are living in the city, share space, time, history, symbolic references: I thus work until the emotion of the moment becomes inseparable from the location's conscious history.

Who do you like to share your everyday life with? Is it other artists, friends in the art business or involved into politics?

With my friends, we question art and politics and vice versa... but we also go swimming together, we bike, watch soccer games and some of my friends also watch bullfights!

One last question: why did you add your first name to your full name?

During the 60's, there was a painter, a friend of Picasso's, a former communist whose name was Edouard Pignon... there had been a lot of confusion because of the resemblance of our names, it was unsettling...because I didn't want to upset him I insisted in adding my first name to my last name.

LEFT PAGE X 2 IMAGES:
Sur L'Avortement. Paris 1975,
Courtesy Galerie Lelong

Q&A

GALLERY 1957

INTERVIEW · FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, MARWAN ZAKHEM.
CREATIVE DIRECTOR, NANA OFORIATTA AYIM

— March 6th, 2016 — Ghana's 59th Independence Day: The hotel lobby of Kempsinki Hotel Gold Coast City is flooded with locals, all adorned in items from their mother's wardrobe. The emotionally charged narrative behind this performance is the brainchild of multimedia artist, Serge Attukwei Clottey.: a personal tribute to the artist's mother in the aftermath of her death. Notably, this also coincided with the launch of Ghana's first commercial gallery dedicated to contemporary art — the only galleryto also offer representation.

Labels are de facto alienating - yet African art finds strength its own narrative: at once complex and extremely diverse. The works of contemporary Ghanian artists today are receiving the attention they deserve through the founding of Gallery 1957. Complementing and highlighting the already present art scene in Accra, the gallery provides a curial platform for contemporary Ghanian art across the local community and through to the international market. Founder and Director Marwan Zakhem, with the creative-hand of Creative Director Nana Oforiatta Ayim, are giving a number of artists the flexibility to keep a foot in their home continent while gaining access to wider audiences overseas.





LEFT PAGE:

My Mother's Wardrobe performance, Mar 2016, Serge Attukwei Clottey, Photo by Nii Odzenma

THIS PAGE:

My Mother's Wardrobe performance, Mar 2016, Serge Attukwei Clottey, Photo by Nii Odzenma

NEXT SPREAD:

Studio of Serge Attukwei Clottey, Work in Progress for My Mother's Wardrobe , ©The Artist





What was the original goal and vision at the genesis of building Gallery 1957?

MZ: My first engagement with the art world was as a collector, and naturally you can't help but become more interested in visual arts and the process of making art. After a few years, I started commissioning work and through these collaborations, started to understand the creative process involved in making art. I began building relationships with artists and it was at that point that I started thinking about taking the next step. I decided to found the gallery to support, complement and highlight the art scene that already exists in Ghana. Many of the artists the gallery are working with have become increasingly visible in the institutional circuits of museums and biennales but do not have gallery representation at home.

Do you feel like you have achieved that vision/goal?

MZ: I think through our collaborations with numerous other institutions in Accra, we are building a platform where artists will benefit from the immense amount of creativity there is in the region. We work closely with ANO, the Nubuke Foundation and the Kumasi Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), where two of the artists we represent have studied. We are certainly going some of the way to achieving our goal by providing artists with the security they need for them to reside in Accra at the beginning of their career; exhibiting artists such as Serge Attukwei Clottey and Zohra Opoku at Gallery 1957 is a key part of the wider vision we have for growing and developing the art scene in Ghana.

What kind of qualities do you look for in the work of artists you chose to represent and exhibit?

NOA: I tend to collaborate with artists that are in some way pushing boundaries, whether it is in terms of form or subject matter; that are looking at the materials around them, as well as their context, and transfiguring them in unexpected ways.

What do you consider the biggest challenge at the moment with regards to sustaining an independent gallery, especially in West Africa?

MZ: As a commercial gallery, one challenge is that there is not as much of a developed market in the region - there is definitely a community of people who are very interested in art, but as a commercial gallery it is in our interest to encourage this community. Naturally as the scene evolves there will be more people who wish to start collecting. We saw a lot of interest from Ghanaians in collecting Serge Attukwei Clottey's work and that was reassuring. It is our ambition to cultivate and grow this collecting community over time.

Tell me a little about the economic nature of owning a gallery in Ghana. What role does the Western market play in supporting the sales of the art work?

MZ: The popularity of contemporary African art in the Western market has definitely increased thanks to exhibitions such as Okwui Enwezor's Venice Biennale and Koyo Kouoh's edition of EVA International in Ireland as well as more commercial events such as this year's The Armory Show and 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair in London and New York. International developments like these generate a wider academic discourse that we are then able to be a part of as we position ourselves in the international market.

I think that there is so much interest globally in contemporary African art that undoubtedly other markets are interested in what we are doing here in Accra, and this is reflected in sales. It is not a question of whether the economy in Ghana is or isn't in place, it certainly is, but our focus is on the community of collectors in this region, and developing their engagement with the gallery and the wider arts market in Ghana.

In what ways have you observed a change in public attitudes to art in Ghana over the past few years?

NOA: The art world in Accra is still quite hermetic, there is still a lot of work to be done in reaching out to a wider audience, however initiatives like the Chale Wote festival,

which is organised each year by Accra Dot Alt, do bring in large audiences that may not usually be interested in art. Also, the founding of organisations and institutions, like Nubuke, the Foundation for Contemporary Art, and the Accra Theatre Workshop with their workshops and outreach programmes for schools and the public, are actively working on expanding audiences. All this has brought about a large shift in the last five years or so, and it will be interesting to see what changes further initiatives will bring about over the next five.

It's often a concern that having an international collector base for African Art can trigger a loss for the origins of an individual's work. Do you agree with this speculation?

MZ: I am a strong believer that the best markets are where there is a local appreciation, so that an infrastructure can be built there and careers fostered. But international interest in African art is important - we now increasingly see artists from Africa presented alongside the work of their international peers, and they are no longer defined just by their continent but by the quality of their work. West Africa is getting its first contemporary art fair this year with Art Accra and I think it is important that we get as much of the art world to the places where these artist gain their inspiration.

Is a more positive outlook to consider the on-going cultural exchange between Africa and other parts of the world? Such as both Picasso and Giacometti's strong reference to African sculpture.

NOA: I don't think Picasso and Giacometti's work was a result of cultural exchange, they referenced and drew inspiration from sculptures from Africa, but there wasn't a concomitant exchange. I think with what is happening now, there is much more parity, more of an exchange between equals, rather than one culture largely drawing on or benefitting from another. There has always been some kind of exchange and also influence on and from the continent; it has always been cosmopolitan, as can be seen in the history of cloth, for example, but I think the narrative around that exchange has changed, with more and more curators, art historians, writers

and thinkers from Africa and the Diaspora creating the context for culture, and also as Marwan said, the work being taken at its own face value, rather than being largely defined by its country or continent of origin. It would be a shame if art from Africa would only be seen or bought abroad, and conversely it would be a shame if its only market were local. What is interesting is that both local and international interest are evolving at the same time, as local institutions are growing, more interest is being awakened internationally, and it's exciting to see is local institutions trying to grow their own models that reflect the nature of their environments and contexts.

Marwan, you once made reference to how the lack of infrastructure leads many artists to seek international rather than local representation after graduation. How important do you think it is for African artists to keep a foot in their home continent?

MZ: As I mentioned, I feel it is very important to keep artists in the country or region from which they draw their inspiration from, and to instead bring the rest of the art world to them. In today's global art world international conversations are inevitable, and also very valuable; however, the artists we work with at Gallery 1957, Serge and Jeremiah for instance, are so engaged in the social and political issues that face the community in Ghana, that it would be a great disservice to everyone – locally and internationally – to remove them from this base; what they are doing here could incite great change, we don't want to lose them.

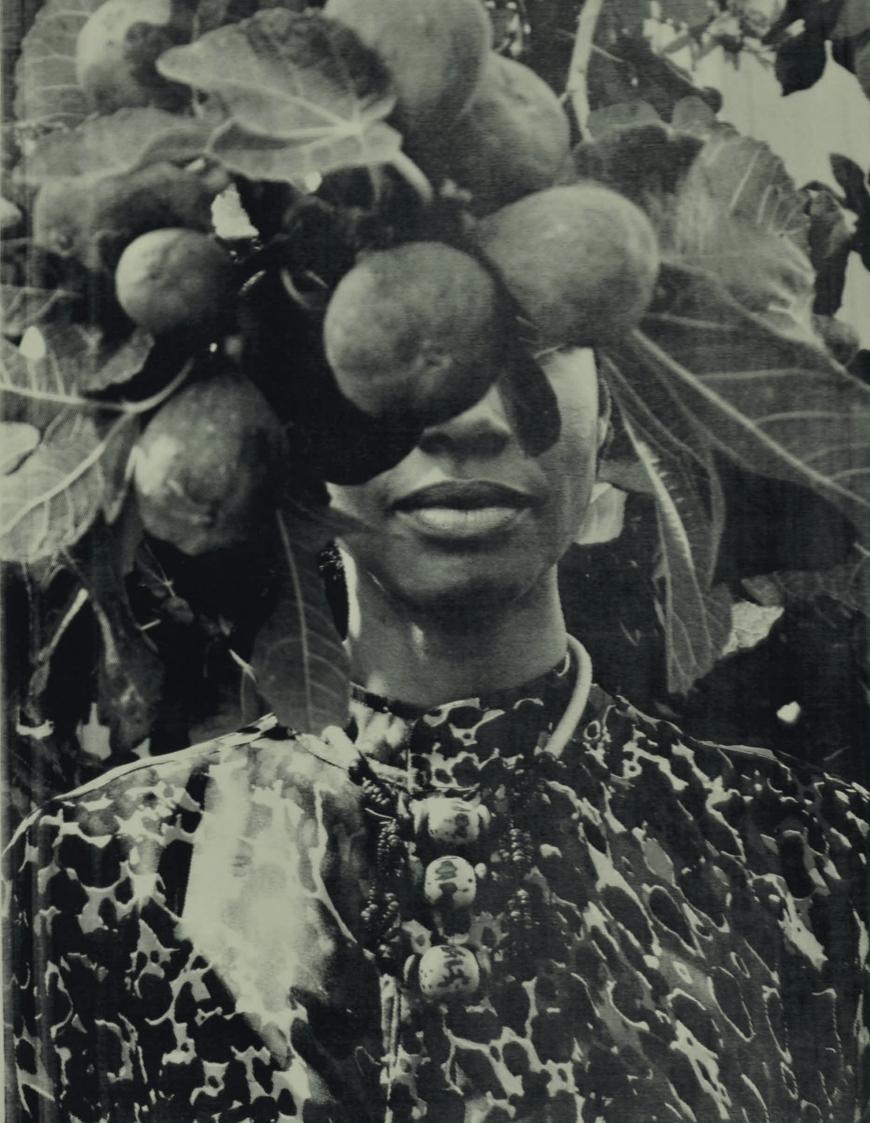
Nana, do you have a personal philosophy on how art should be displayed?

NOA: I don't have a fixed philosophy, if anything it is ever evolving. It is also contingent on each individual artist and the work they create. Having said that, as a cultural historian, I am very interested in looking into how art and culture has been displayed here over centuries, how that has evolved, and how that can be tailored to contemporary contexts, as well as in expanding the notion of what encompasses art and how it can be interacted with.



ABOVE: Wisteria, 2015, Zohra Opoku

RIGHT PAGE:
Ficus Carica, 2015, Zohra Opoku







TOP IMAGE:

Nana Oforiatta Ayim, Creative Director, Gallery 1957, Accra, photo by Nii Odzenma

BOTTOM IMAGE

Portrait of Marwan Zakhem, Founder, Gallery 1957, 2016, image courtesy of Nii Odzenma and Gallery 1957, Accra

Current Represented Artists

Serge Attukwei Clottey

Serge Attukwei Clottey is known for his work that examines the powerful agency of everyday objects. Working across, installation, performance, photography and sculpture, Clottey explores narratives of personal, family and collective histories often relating to trade and migration. Based in Accra and working internationally, Clottey the creator of Afrogallonism, an artistic concept that comments on consumption within modern Africa through the utilisation of yellow gallon containers. Through cutting, drilling, stitching and melting found materials, Clottey's sculptural installations are bold assemblages that act as a means of inquiry into questions of form and history.

Jeremiah Quarshie

Jeremiah Quarshie's hyper-realistic paintings explore the boundaries between physical and digital production; considering the construction of imagery, his work investigates the nature of art itself. Through detailed portraiture, emphasising the connectedness between people otherwise divided by social, economic or geographical conditions, Quarshie reveals an acute social awareness. Using friends and ordinary women he scouts for as models, Quarshie documents individuals in actual and invented roles - including beauty queens, businesswomen, and labourers - to demonstrate ideas of hope against failing political systems.

Zohra Opoku

Based in Accra, and of German and Ghanaian descent, Zohra Opoku's versatile work expands across installation, performance and lens-based media. Opoku's examination of textile culture considers fashion's political, psychological and socio-cultural role in relation to both African history, and individualistic or societal identities.

Yaw Owusu

Yaw Owusu's sculptural installations repurpose one pesewa coins. By appropriating Ghana's nearly worthless loose change as structural material, Owusu interrogates ideas surrounding state policies, economic practices, and the meaning of independence. Introduced as an attempt to cure the economy's inflation in 2007, these coins now have almost no value, and are no longer widely accepted. Acquired through a series of negotiations with Ghana's banks, the coins navigate the bureaucracies that continue to demarcate social movement.

gallery1957.com

9 Ar to W

Editor's Picks:

Luciana Garbarni

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The First Night, Juno Calypso, 2015



Juno Calypso — Photography

Kitsch meets lust when Juno becomes Joyce - the London based photographer's alter ego works through frustratingly alienated scenes to question notions of modern femininity - from structured sexuality to rituals of seduction. Juno's solitary studies are at once familiar and beckoningly unsettling to witness - most recently, Joyce's skylarking led Juno to explore the fantasy of a one-woman lover's retreat. Spending a week alone at a couple's-only resort in Pennsylvania, the Honeymoon series birthed Juno's most famous image to-date of Joyce dipped crown to toe in green paint, at the forefront of 15 angle mirror. "That image is all about why we feel ugly." Juno explained "Why, on some days, we look in the mirror and just see a gargoyle. We actually see a monster. And why we spend hours in the bathroom trying to shed, shave and wash off this horror to reveal our true 'beautiful' selves."

Juno is currently represented by TJ Boulting and Flowers Gallery. Following her success of the 2016 International Photography Award (IPA), Juno will be exhibiting alongside Carolina Mizrahi at Arusha Gallery from July 29th - August 14th 2016



Zohra OpokuPhotography

The introspective nature of Zohra Opoku's work employs metaphors of repletion and disguise. In both cases, she presents something very interesting: an objective representation of the subjective self. This experience enrols her aesthetic practice into sculptural modules an [in]direct social commentary of African history and societal identities. Drawing on references from her Ghanian heritage, the use of textures and textiles plays a heavy role in Opoku's work. Where many communities hand make their best clothes with hand selected fabrics, everyday wear in Ghana is found in second-hand stock from the West or otherwise. When artists first create portraits, for theirselves or otherwise, a question is posed: which

of the many aspects of their identities do they depict first? Which ones do they express later on as they continue to create more? What aspects of themselves do they often portray and which ones do they neglect? "Most of the time I feel it is my advantage to be enrooted and to keep the drive of moving and learning about my identity and expressing it in my work." the artist answers.

Zohra is currently represented by Gallery 1957 and Mariane Ibrahim Gallery. Her work will be exhibited at the 1:54 art fair in London from Oct 6th - 9th.

3.

Rowan Newton — Painting

It's not often that we can pin-point or accurately track the growth and development of a contemporary artist living today. From top collectors and patrons to a diverse range of communities, Rowan's onset with art drew a broad range of crowds that galleries had previously struggled to engage with. Though some may credit this to a balance between themes of street and modern art, it could also be interpreted as something more simple: emotional honesty. His technique challenges traditional values of beauty, where flaws can be expressed through drips of bright colour and an artistic touch is emphasised only through an uninhibited connection with his muse(s) - thus creating thrillingly intimate portraits that trigger a moment of deep reflection (of self, or otherwise) in viewers. The artist recently released his 13th screen print with Jealous - all 12 prints prior had sold out.

Rowan's work can be found at Jealous London, Scream Editions and at the Ben Oakley Gallery in Greenwich.



Revolutions Way, Rowan Newton

4.

Othello De'Souza-Hartley — Photography

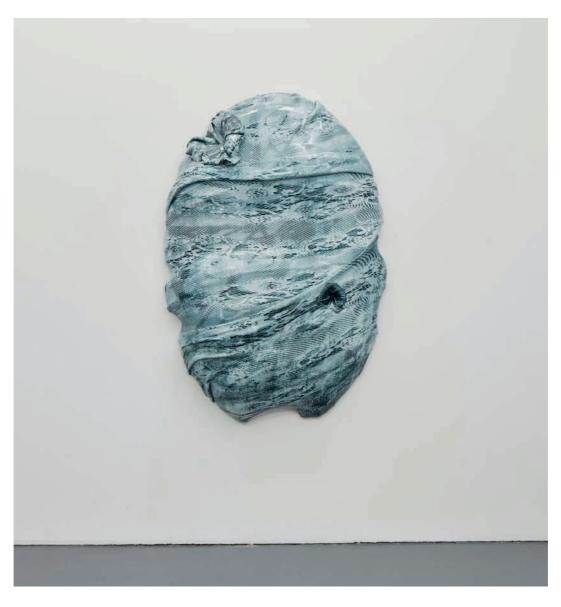
Othello De-Souza-Hartley's Masculinity series sees the artist become the subject-body. As he interrogates conceptions of masculinity in the presentday; the vulnerability in his own performance of masculinity and that of other men in today's society is highlighted. De'Souza Hartley's commentary on masculinity in the 21st century tips the foundations for which they are based and how they are shaped and reaffirmed by coded rituals and spaces. He asks: Is masculinity a performance? More recent works explore themes of power and indulgence, nonetheless playing on notions of identity. Othello hopes to extend the boundaries of his medium through creating one of his largest-scale projects to date: a 1.95 metre photograph based on methodologies and female warriors of Benin who existed from the 17th to 19th century.

Othello recently completed a commission for the University of Arts, London.



Fathers and Sons, Othello De'Souza-Hartley





Prosopon, Neal Rock

Neal Rock
— Painting/

mixed-media

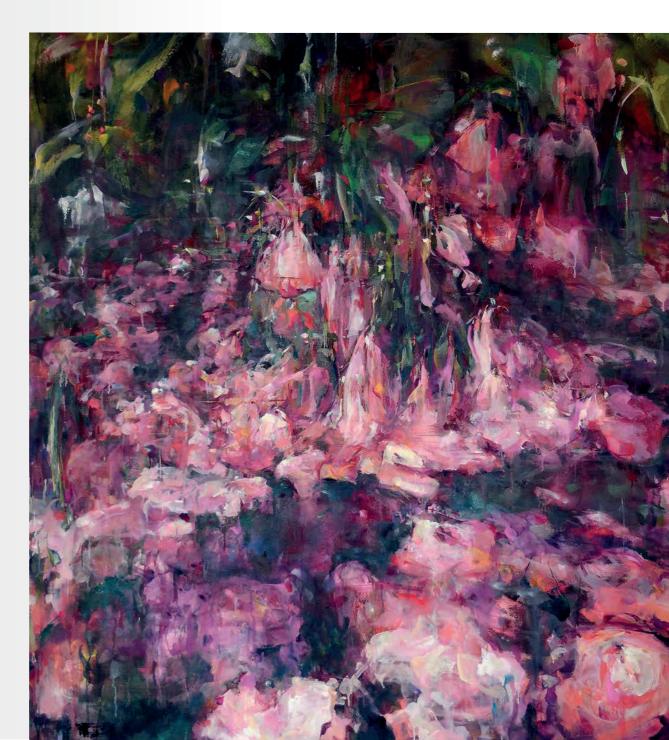
As a finalist of the XL Catlin Art Prize, 2016 has already kicked off positively for Rock who plans to send the second half finishing his Grant Wood Painting Fellowship at the University of Iowa. His work was selected during the judging process as a pitch to make a lasting impression on the world of art, a goal that is easily fulfilled. Using painted silicone, which is then pigmented, torn, printed, stretch and draped, his pieces are a wonder to behold in their ability to stand independently sublime from the extensive labour of their production process. There is a constant wealth of novelty in the final piece through Neal's combination of materials.

His current exhibition 'Polymer' is on show at Fold Gallery alongsideValerie Kolakis & Scarlett Bowman. In November, Leila Heller Gallery in Chelsea, New York City will also exhibit a solo survey of Neal's work.

6. Hyunju Kim — Painting

Hyunju Kim explores issues related to the subconscious, memory, and feeling through the process of painting. Her practice often searches the ungraspable connections between reality and dreams, as well as those between life and death. Her paintings reflect a deep fascination with psychoanalysis and dream interpretation, representing her own attempt to examine the dichotomy between waking life and the dream state. In her view, dreams revisit old memories that haven't fully assimilated and her paintings revisit her own dreams. Simultaneously paintings create new dreams.

Born, raised and educated in South Korea, Kim currently lives and works in Portland. She is currently searching for a studio space in the Seattle area and excited about experiencing a bigger art world and market.



Amanda's Poncho, Hyunju Kim

Francesa Pasquali — Sculpture

Italian artist Francesca Pasquali creates striking sculptures from everyday objects, fusing innovation with semantics. Her most famous work incorporates the use of plastic straws - an object we typically view as singular or mundane, into a mass structure of true intrigue. Discovering that each material has an endless potential for beauty, especially those of a dull, industrial kind, her works evoke and inspire a plethora of responses. "The materials I use have intrinsic power. My eye selects them because their characteristics capture my attention! An object or a type of material (a drinking straw, a rubber band, a piece of neoprene) might not appear to have any particular aesthetic value but if it is carefully observed and assembled, juxtaposed to thousands of the same elements, it is revalued, taking on new form and power that make the matter come alive." she comments. She observes the world and recreates it with alchemical sensitivity, dividing, enlarging and manipulating as she goes.

Francesca Pasquale is currently represented by galleria Tornabuoni Arte, Italy and Cortesi Gallery, London.



Frappa Nera, Francesa Pasquali



8.

Piotr Lakomy— Sculpture/ Installation

Piotr Lakomy's practice incorporates the use of raw industrial materials. His application of base materials such as insulation, aluminium, light fittings allude to a visual austerity. Many works seem to plainly reference minimalism, yet when faced with these works the human labour is laid bare, the aluminium plates have been bent and folded into existence by hand. Lakomy's work deals with artistic challenges in public space: degradation, transformation, and the active and inert. Reflecting on our connections with our surroundings,

his sculptures might be described as ruined monuments to these conflicting relationships. He is also an independent curator and an author of publications linked to art: T-HOOD (Temporary Hood; 2011), DUST SHOW (action in public space; Copenhagen; Denmark; 2011), and DUST SNOW (the Winter Sculpture Park; Poznań; 2010).

Lakomy's works can be found at the CASS Sculpture Foundation and Galeria Stereo.





9.

Benjamin John Hall — Mixed media

Part shoe maker, part inventor, Benjamin John Hall is committed to producing advanced projects in footwear. Conceptually orientated and often exploring design and manufacturing processes his work challenges today's notions of footwear. Pieces are made by hand in London – by himself and his team over a lengthy research and development period. His experimental work attracts attention and discussion from fashion stylists, photographers, magazine editors, and film-makers, and has been exhibited worldwide. The dramatic use of both film and live performance have become characteristics of his work, using them as a platform to present new collections.

Benjamin John Hall is currently exhibiting a collection of design works at the Fashion Space Gallery titled Laboratory 12, commissioned and curated by Ligaya Salazar.

X-Ray Kompromat, Benjamin John Hall

The Eye of **ADAM BUTLER**

The "HD" (for lack of a better term) nature of your imagery is powerful, what would you say the impact on your audience is intended to be?

I strive to produce images which have great clarity of light and tonal immediacy but I am not interested in a HD look or sharpness in itself. Yes my images - especially my black and white images - often feature simple compositions with sharp light contrasts, and my editing techniques lead to a definite impact and preciseness of tone which I love, and I suppose the consequential illusion of great sharpness is a result of this clarity; I don't like the hazy, soft focus feel.

I work also as an architectural and interiors photographer, which requires a considerable amount of technical preciseness with no room for sloppy techniques, so I naturally carry over the same exactness into my personal work. I always use good quality lenses in order to minimise geometrical distortions and make sure vertical lines are straight and parallel but really the luminosity and tonal contrasts in my images are the only things that interest me, and not really in any sharpness or "high resolution" technique. Besides, my images are designed to end up on a wall and consequently they are generally viewed from a distance, not with a magnifying glass or zoomed in on a computer screen!

You capture what could be interpreted as the 'ultimate beauty' of a concrete jungle, how do you envision your own imagery?

I am drawn to geometrical forms and the ensuing layering or arrangement of space and depth, and how light falling upon, reflecting off, filtering through or changing behind modulates and articulates buildings or other forms. This I find hugely inspiring and even within an urban concrete jungle I find details or wider views of this geometrical arrangement of space which can be so satisfying when transferred to a two dimensional form via my camera lens.

All of my most successful images, regardless of the subject, feature a certain structural integrity - or balanced composition and harmony - along with a particular, often dramatic light which I suppose makes them appear attractive but this is as much a consequence of my style as conscious desire to make something appear beautiful! I do however think that we are all drawn magnetically towards pleasing imagery - so of course all artists strive to produce art which appeals to collectors, why else would they buy art unless they loved it? For me, the luminosity and clarity of light, and how it describes the vastness of space and time are so important to me and my imagery. The timelessness this evokes, and the essential beauty and infinite nature of any view with gradually modulating contrasts tones is fundamental to my vision, and if this resonates with viewers then I am happy if they find it beautiful!

There is a clear lack of human presence, the architecture or the space itself takes over. Is it intentional?

I love the feeling of melancholic loneliness in cityscapes or scenes. However this can often be more effectively evoked by a human presence, which can crystallise this emptiness, or the isolated nature of the human condition within the city. Edward Hopper did this brilliantly, as did many other artists. But I am more interested in making the city itself the subject, with the multitude of its forms, its atmosphere and the light; sweeping views are by their very nature so vast that there is no space for any human presence; but I do often include people in street scenes. Sometimes I deliberately pose them where I want them to be, as this saves time to wait for someone to randomly appear at the right place, otherwise I have to be patient!

I am not interested much in "street photography", in the totally random presence of people within a cityscape - this I find to more akin to photojournalism. Randomness of chance can be wonderful, but being a rational person I always prefer to be in control of what I am doing.



In many ways, your photography has allowed audiences to witness the silent bliss of a still landscape, why have you chosen this genre?

I find that the senses are often cross stimulated by strange phenomena. For example, a wide seascape view gives me that feeling of quietness or tranquillity, as do views above the rooftops of cities at dawn or dusk. Space and light are important aspects of this. Views in which you do not see the horizon or the sky tend to be much more edgy or claustrophobic, and the pattern of light and shade, or colour, tone or texture have to take over. One of my most successful black and white images is a great example of this, I called it simply "Steps and Shadows", shot on the island of Panarea, a black and white image in which the patterning of the light creates interesting shapes which can be read in an almost abstract manner. There is a small segment of sky visible at the top of the picture, but this I deliberately toned to black, thereby not allowing the viewer any respite and forcing their attention to the interplay of light and shade.

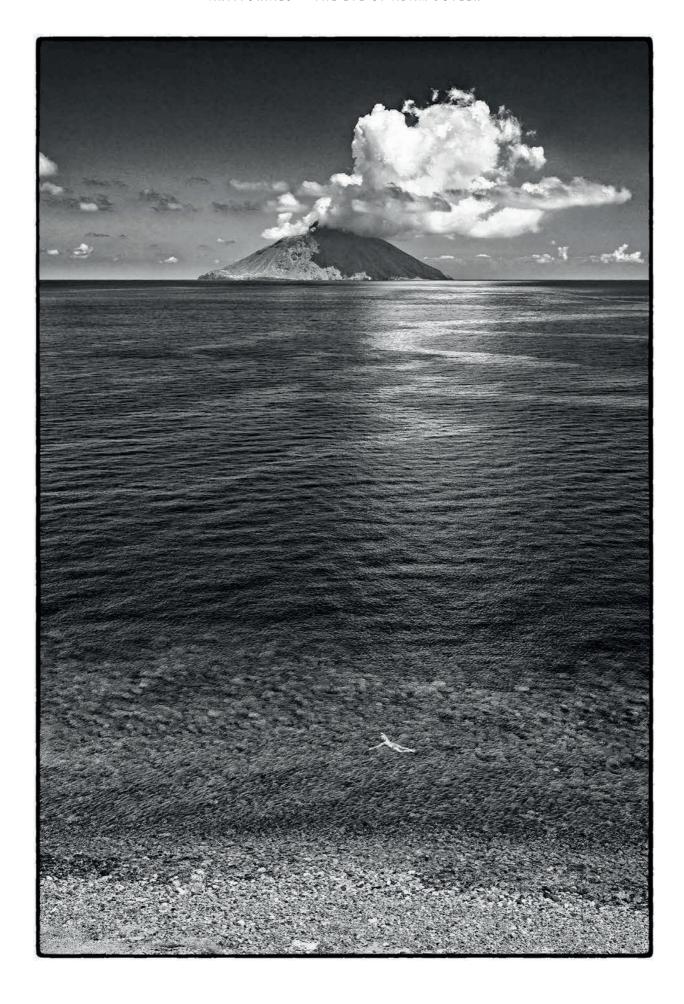
And finally, in a world of digital revolution, do you consider the camera as an extension of your visualisations, or simply as a 'tool of the trade'?

The digital revolution has not changed my artistic vision! It has just made capturing images more efficient and in many ways it has opened up a whole new world of possibilities to photographers who can now much more easily manipulate their images for artistic effect or even create their work from scratch.

I don't think it's important for anyone to know whether a wide sweeping view of a city is taken with a wide angle lens or a detail taken from afar, or whether I am close to a subject, I am not a fan of photographic quirks such as distorted wide angle views in which nearby objects become enlarged through exaggerated foreshortening, nor the "dumbing down" of space which often the use of compressing telephoto lenses can evoke. I furthermore detest the look of any clearly "photoshopped" image, such as the tonal mapping or high dynamic range images which are in my opinion completely flat and lifeless. The camera is my medium but I try to see as a painter might view a scene and then apply this vision to try to overcome the technical limitations of the photographic language. I love how the the hard contrasts, the rich tones and the preciseness of the photographic genre matches my artistic vision, I relish how this allows me to be be creative whether or not I am creating a black and white image or a bright, colourful view, in each case regardless of the subject matter. For me, any image should have that immediacy and impact that I look for, and for this reason I am not adverse to extensively manipulating any photograph digitally. I do not limit my vision to the click of a camera and whatever might come out, for me this is just the starting point! I never try to capture any particular place, it is more the essence or the feel of a place or view that I try to evoke.

I strive to produce images which have great clarity of light and tonal immediacy but I am not interested in a HD look or sharpness in itself.

- ADAM BUTLER



COLIN MCCALLUM

Colin is a Scottish born painter who studied fine art in London where he lived until he moved to Barcelona in 2002. He has exhibited his work throughout the world and has his paintings in private and corporate collections in numerous countries.

He is an artist that thrives in an urban environment. His paintings are abstracted images that come from his experience of contemporary living, with all its technology and fast pace. Colour is an important aspect of his work and he often uses metallic and fluorescent paints that accentuate the viewing experience. He mostly works in series. This approach drives not only each individual piece, but it is also the binding factor throughout Colin's impressive catalogue. Each work belongs to a series in which a technique, a collection of materials, and a graphic pattern are derived and refined and repeated to form a holistic unity. The carefully chosen titles of the series coherently refer to processes rather than common subjects, and many echo the lexicon of computer programming and electronics. Craft versus technology.

In your artist statement on your website you state the following: "Ultimately my intention is to reproduce without representing, evoke without illustrating and express without formulating", Can you expand on the meaning of this?

It would be constricting for me to literally try to represent an idea, for example, if I am interested in a digital computer screen or city buildings at night, I would not want this in front of me in order to copy the form. Whilst there is nothing wrong with artists who require a physical reference to create their art, for me it gets in the way. The visual or memory of it is in my head, I can see it in my mind's eye, and I believe that this is where creativity begins. The starting point of the idea becomes something else as I begin to paint, creating the artwork. This is what I refer to as to

evoke without illustrating, it is an essence of something real or tangible. Without having this reference I can allow myself to explore. The freedom of technique and Imagination can open many doors.

I experiment with the medium I choose for each idea; the paint can take me in alternative directions. The idea often dictates the choice of materials, for this reason I like to use a variety of paints and tools, such as metallic, fluorescent and spray paints and stencils, which allow me to optimise the exploration process. The medium is an extension of the concept and offers many ways to pursue and distort it.

The image observes the real and through the medium transforms it to create an equivalent reality. My paintings often have many layers and complexities but my intention is to also reveal what is hidden beneath

Can you give After Nyne a brief look into your history as an artist, and how this has, in turn, affected your craft?

I studied art at Camberwell School of Art, London, at that time a school best known for producing figurative artists. I spent a lot of time in the life drawing room that gave me a strong understanding of space and form and ultimately the appreciation of the importance of drawing. I applied this skill to my art from this point forward, a skill that I have perfected throughout my career.

Even nowadays architects and designers, who use computers with complicated software, still draw, it is essential to quickly document an idea or image. Drawing is a rapid connection from head to hand, a short hand for many artists, whether it is on a computer or with a basic pencil and paper. For example, I always use a sketchbook to make quick drawings whilst they are fresh in my mind, these are visual diaries and I often refer to them for my paintings. It is useful to look back at ideas that I may or may not pursue.



Early in my career I was more interested in urban landscape paintings, large format size and always painted from memory. I was less occupied with colour and my works were more tonal than colourful. Gradually I began to move away from observational painting to using images from my experience and imagination rather than what was immediately in my field of vision. I had always used oil paint but as my art changed so did my choice of medium and acrylic paint gave me faster results and in turn had an affect on the final image. For example, for my Template series, I pour the paint directly onto the canvas; this would not be possible with oil.

I have always been very disciplined and I treat going to my studio as if it were a job, because for me it is. I have been fortunate to have had spacious studios close to my home which have given me the luxury of more time to create my work. I have usually worked in isolation but having a dialogue with other artists has always been beneficial for discussion of ideas and feedback.

I began exhibiting my work very early on in my career in a variety of galleries in the UK and studio exhibitions. In more recent years, I have been more active in local art events with artists who work in completely different disciplines; it is good to see what others are doing. I have had the opportunity to show internationally at many art fairs around the world, it is a great way to reach a wide and varied audience.

Over the course of 5 - 10 years, how do you see your work developing?

I don't normally look or plan that far ahead, I am usually thinking about the next painting! However, if I look back 5 to 10 years, I can see more clearly how my work has changed and taken alternative directions. This was an organic progression rather than a conscious decision. I began to work in series around 7 years ago and I am pleased that I did. Each series expands on the initial starting point and in turn has led to new series and extensive experimentation with mediums and ways of applying them. Based on my progress in the last decade, if I maintain this level it will be very exciting. The last couple of years have been especially productive and I plan to continue this way. My newest works have great scope for development and further experimentation.

I am also involved in a project with another artist who works with sound and computer technology. We have been experimenting for the last 18 months with an idea to transform certain of my paintings into light projections using mapping technology. This is very exciting and opens up a myriad of viewing options for these images. We call the project IRIS and we have so far selected 3 or 4 paintings to experiment with the idea, it has received a lot of attention so we hope to perfect the technology to make it viable for art collectors and perhaps corporate displays.

Thinking ahead, I also see possibilities of working with textiles, fashion and 3D printing, my latest works have a diversity of applications and I am open minded as to where it can take me as an artist.

There has to be 'fuel for the fire' what is your fuel?

My fuel is a life long curiosity of the visual world. Since I was a child I was always passionate about art. I have always been intrigued by the possibility of transforming a flat surface, there are so many options. Like a writer with a blank page, there is an excitement about what comes next.

Living in a huge metropolis like London has been a catalyst for my art. I thrive on the energy that a huge city can provide, whilst it can be overwhelming at times, the intensity can also be exhilarating. I thrive in the accelerated life-style of contemporary urban environments.

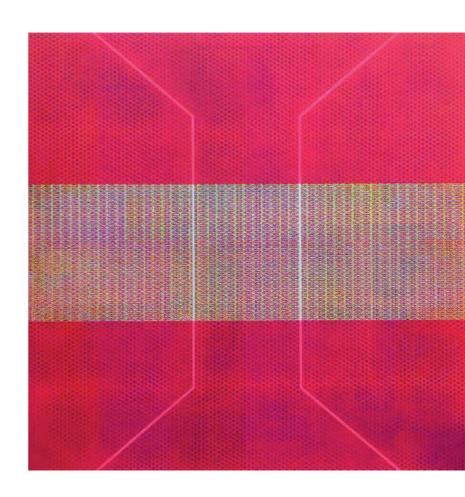
Other art is always stimulating. If I see a particularly good exhibition, I am instantly rejuvenated and cannot wait to get to my studio to carry on my work! I have varied tastes and my interests are not just restricted to painting, I am stimulated by technology, architecture, design, cinema and literature, amongst other things. There is so much to absorb in contemporary city life.

Also, my paintings themselves are a fuel that gives life to the next series of work.

I think this quote from the writer W H Auden is a good way to summarise: "Art lies in the valley of its own making".

"Art lies in the valley of its own making".

- W H AUDEN



The Talented MR GREG HARRIS



Tell us a little about the practical process involved in a body of work. What are your key techniques?

I guess one key technique would be my drawings come onto the canvas. I don't layer up the paintings, I do them all in one go I paint 'wet on wet' so I can always come back and manipulate anything I want. There is quite a quick turn around to a lot of my paintings, but, it doesn't mean it happens in a few hours. I draw, I sit with the image, I look at the image, and I try and work out the colours. And once I feel happy with that, I will start on the canvas. But once I actually start a piece, it changes, the aesthetics change in a way, it becomes a reality and you have to respond to that, its a case of following your initial idea but responding to what happens on the canvas.

A lot of my work is portraits and landscapes, and they tend to be breaking down reality into form and shapes, I get these shapes through the hundreds of brushes I own, simply because I want to see how many marks I can create, I even use fingers and cloths, anything that will give me a different mark, because each different mark gives a different meaning and feel, if affects how you read the image. I like to experiment with colours and colour combination, its about how far I can push the colour before it breaks?

You often stick to one subject, any reason for this?

I am quite a simple and straight forward kind of guy, more introverted, calm, and I think the reason why I do follow a singular subject matter is because I want to capture that peaceful moment. If you're sitting down in the park and you see a bird flying by, it's a seemingly 'nothing' moment, but it's absolutely wonderful when you are in that moment nonetheless. You forget who you are and you forget your surroundings, your past

your future and you're very much in that moment. I think that I'm trying to capture those singular things, to bring that experience from out there into the painting to give the viewer a reminder of that very private moment within themselves and within the moment.

Who were your other early influences in your beginnings as visual artist and how have the impacted your current work?

I was very lucky that after University, I was able to join a gallery who represented an artist called Paul Wright, and he was like a mentor to me. He was a painter himself and was very generous with his knowledge. He has been a huge influence on my art and on my life, and in getting me to where I am now. I have people like my wife, who was shocked when I said I was going to become an artist, but she is one of my best supporters. And there is my dad also who is very supportive in many ways, he even did my website!

Getting back into the industry is difficult, how did you feel getting back into the industry after your break following university?

My mentor at the time said I had to be patient, that you've got to look at it like you're not going to get anywhere for 10 years, which is daunting, or you can look at it and just with it. But between some one like Damien Hurst and a graduate, there are so many different levels of artist, and even if you don't ever make it to the spot light area you can find your own place within it, you just have to be patient and take your time.





Who is **KATIE LIPS?**

In an age where many question if we can really fall and focus wholeheartedly on love, art and spirituality in the time of digital dominance, it's worth noting that the relationship between technology and art is a parallel one, for a lack of better description. The former deserves due diligence for acting as the fundamental force in evolution of the latter, however the latter holds all praise for directing the final product. The work of contemporary artist Katie Lips, lies somewhere between the two. Known to 'challenge technology start up culture' and 'the business of the digital', Katie works today as an artist who is not afraid to shop around for contemporarily rich references. Here are five things you need to know about the author behind a series of works that epitomise the modern-day individual mindset.

Disruption Rules OK: everyone's at it in the world of tech; disrupting, that is.

They're disrupting established ways of doing things, each other and themselves. Disruptors are heroes and disruption is king!

There's not a lot of reflection in start-up-land; there isn't time. Entrepreneurs are busy developing disruptive ideas, growing their business and 'shooting for the moon'.



Whether changing the world or getting rich, you'd imagine startups behaved uniquely, and did things their thoughtful own way. I fear too many startups nowadays are eagerly following a well trodden path, a blueprint. They follow the rules and make people with money richer.

Where is the disruption in that?

It's Personal: my work's about challenging these wouldbe disruptors to think a little deeper.

I came to technology in the early 1990s. It was set to change everything. It did, and I helped it. A startup founder in my twenties, I'd left my career as an artist on hold for Web 2.0, Social Media, Co-working, Meetups, and making millions. I worked as an Entrepreneur, Social Media evangelist and Artist - hooking art into the early social web.

Today my work is based on my first hand experience of high-tech, fast-paced startups, striving to change the world for the better in one way or another. I am deeply fond of this world, as well as wishing to challenge it. I see the worlds of art and business as similar and connected.

To my business life I bring 'thinking like an artist', to my art I bring 'office supplies'.

"Disruptors are heroes and disruption is king!"

- KATIE LIPS

But Seriously: I occasionally describe my work as "Post Internet"

My work is sort of about the Internet. But I care little for the title. I might like to 'disrupt' Post Internet Art. Yes, my work responds to a world in which the Internet 'has happened', but everything post internet is by its nature, "post internet".

The most high-tech thing about my work it is a Post-It Note. That's a lie of course, a I use various platforms to promote and sell my work. I'm on Instagram. I even tried Snapchat. But my practice is not specific to a medium.

I Am the Bootstrap Aesthetic:

Visually, my work is punctuated by bold, poppy imagery, slogans and unfolding narratives. I'm keen to harness 'the bootstrap aesthetic'. There's a lo-fi / makeshift quality to the early days of what might turn out to be big businesses. The bootstrap aesthetic is part and parcel of startup culture; you can't look too slick: exciting enough; poor but

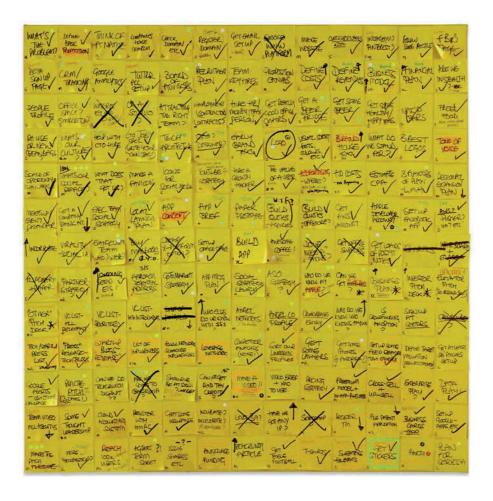
creative. It's MacBooks and marker pens. The sticky notes in my work are not just about the embodiment of Agile in all forms - (no sticky = no startup) but are about the temporary nature of Startupland. They hang around. Sometimes longer than the businesses wrote their ideas and ambitions on them.

Thinking big is vital to growing as an artist.

In March I had a pop up show at Jealous Gallery; "Surprised But Not Delighted": technology startup culture; the value of ideas, the price of ambitions, and the promise technology makes to the hopeful. In April I exhibited at The Other Art Fair and focussed my show around recent work "Disruption Rules".

I'm working on a series commissions and 'stealth projects' for later in the year, but would like to go large scale. Working across mixed-media collage, paint, video, performance, I might just as easily create a 'business-as-an-artwork'. I want to put a startup in a gallery. I want to change the world with technology and art.

I'm moonshot, after all.





PAVLO KERESTEY'S

Toxic Stars

Imagine kids and cameras showing up in a forest at night or in a cave, the dreamlike images of figures glowing in a toxic natural landscape, nature becoming an extension of the urban. Pavlo Kerestey's paintings exude an almost overpowering energy.

Burning stars, falling asteroids, bloody reflections, fireballs, castings spells onto a fiery show. In spite of the catastrophic intonations, these paintings vibrate engineered by colossal power. They are glowing at the temperature of a starry nucleus, maximally raised with synthetic colors. A state of emergency. And yet, this explosion of form and color is almost romantic, enthusiastic, life affirming, ever hoping for a good outcome. (Victoria Burlaka)

Born in Uzhhorod, Ukraine, Pavlo Kerestey emerged from the Paris Commune, a vibrant, underground post soviet artist scene in Kiev and represented the Ukrainian New Wave in the late 1990s as a prolific

painter, engaged in ongoing painting production. He produced symbolist pop worlds and surrealist image configurations. Pavlo Kerestey has since been represented by and exhibited his work in major solo and group exhibitions from the 1909s onwards, at Post Anaesthesia, Villa Stuck Munich (1992) and Grassi Museum, Dresden (1993), Abstraction in Russian Art (2002), The State Russian Museum, St Petersburg, Russia (2001), Premonition - Ukrainian Art Now at the Saatchi Gallery (2014) and more.

His painting then evolved in a multidisciplinary way – combining painting, video and performance alongside our collaborative project, under the name of Szuper Gallery, which has since developed from the late 1990s. Since then Szuper Gallery has been a tool to develop formal vocabularies that extend and define the concept of gallery as institutional critique. Their multi-media approach spans video,

performance, installation and paintings and responds to art world and global contexts, grappling with changing definitions of the social and addresses the anxieties embedded in capitalist fantasies. In these multi-media installations paintings spin in and out of video worlds, animations, 3D models, inhabited by a strange set of performers.

A recent work, Ballet Granite - The Cave features a series of painted installations, that re-appear in large scale in the gallery, through a series of related painting and in a animated video.

The dystopic landscape made up of rocks, caves, stars and smoke re-appears again as meticulously sculpted model set, reminiscent of the nineteenth century cave, as symbol of a kind of domestic splendor that found its fullest expression in the decadent literature of the late 19th century. In Adalbert Stifter's 1853 Rock Crystal innocent children are lost in a magnificent glacier cave. Ludwig II of Bavaria's castle was furnished with a luculent cavern in which the mad king was rowed across an artificial lake to the strains of Wagner. The elemental and the catastrophic feature in picturesque descriptions of a lone child survivor of the plague. The performance and paintings features on a band of survivors who reside between the rocks. The characters, a group of psychedelic astronauts, hippies on a strange voyage of self-discovery, reminiscent of Barnet Schroeder's "Search of the Valley" or paintings by Antoine Watteau's bucolic, rococo staging of the Voyage to Kythera.





RENNIE PILGREM

Where Motion Meets It's Medium

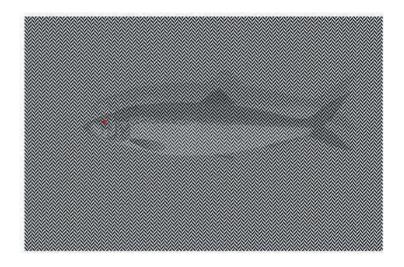
Huge, pulsating bass, one step away from bringingup your breakfast, or maybe it was just the ecstasy.

In 1990 as part of seminal rave band 'Rhythm Section', Rennie Pilgrem witnessed the emerging power of underground DIY music culture whilst on stage in front of 15,000 people. The music, 'hardcore breakbeat' was a unique blend of dub reggae, hip hop, house music and anything from cartoon samples to snippets of popular adverts. The djsplayed 12" vinyl which was initially pressed-up and sold from car boots by the artists themselves....sometimes tens of 1000's for a 'Big Tune' like Rhythm Section's 'Comin' On Strong EP' that sold nearly 20,000 copies. The music splintered and evolved into a multitude of genres, most notably drum and bass.

After two highly-acclaimed decades as a globe-trotting DJ and award-winning recording artist, Rennie decided to switch from audio to visual art. In 2013 he found himself walking behind Tracey Emin, as part of a huge 'conga' of Summer Exhibition 'Selected' artists, going to the Church opposite the RA to be blessed. The artist sees a parallel between the the Rave scene

The artist sees a parallel between the the Rave scene 25 year's go and the art world now. Substitute the musical disparate influences with: minimalism, pop art, surrealism, imagined isolated landscapes and healthy dose of dry wit. He is one the one-hand continuing a long tradition of mixing the old and new and coming-up with something fresh and on the other taking advantage of the opportunities facing the modern artist to gain exposure for their work -be it a mono print, or a photograph, or a paintings, laser cut wood, completely digital or a hybrid.

Whatever the discipline, art can now be exposed to the world without having to rely on traditional methods. A new piece can be uploaded onto the artist's own website/Instagram account and/or online galleries in a matter of hours. The artist sets the prices, availability, edition size. There hasn't been a better time in history for an artist to take control of their destiny.



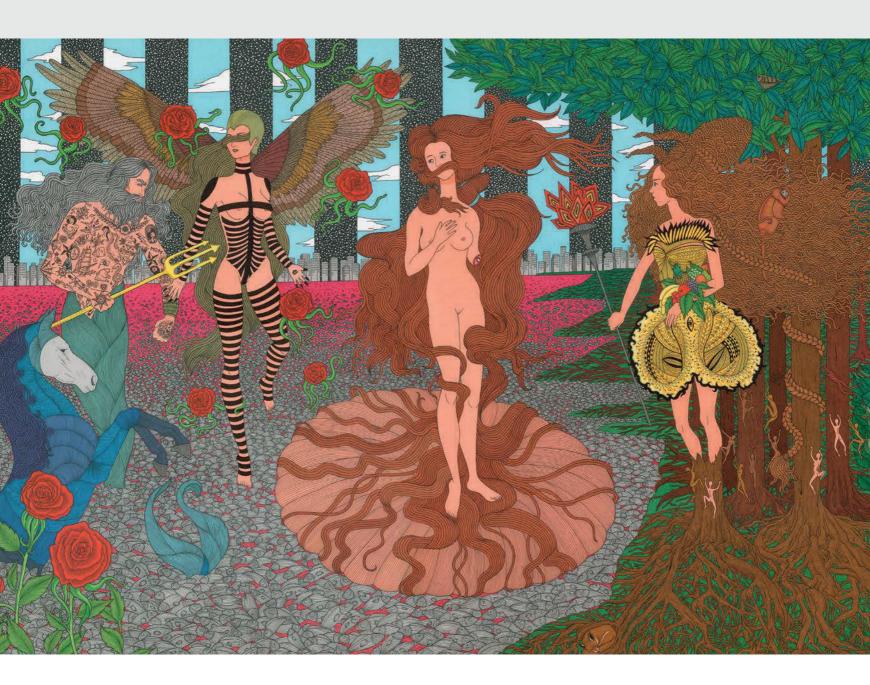
"Whatever the discipline, art can now be exposed to the world without having to rely on traditional methods."

- RENNIE PILGREM



SABRINA COLLARES

A Woman of Substance



Your work narratives draw on many complicated subjects and includes some heavy political influences. Would you say you and your work are also political?

I do like talking about the hard subjects. I think when it's colourful, you can get lost, but when you look closer

you find the deeper meaning behind it. I don't want to offend or shock, I want people to digest things slowly when understanding my work.

I like finding different ways to highlight the issues I want to bring up, without being so obvious - using symbols and metaphors that are representative of ideas and

meanings. But I am really interested in politics, I am actually thinking of doing a masters in social studies. Political issues add value to my art. The reality is that I'm very passionate about society in general, I have perspective and I analyse accordingly. I want to promote empowerment, and empower everyone who hasn't or doesn't feel like they have been empowered, up to this date. In Rio, I lived near the City of God, I wasn't rich, I struggled, but my father taught me the importance of education, and now I can see that importance. So I read a lot, and I'm often overwhelmed by the issues we have. Sometimes I feel helpless, because I want to help everyone.

Tell us a little about the creative process when completing a piece. Do you construct your drawings part by part or in one sitting?

Neither, it's crazy! Sometimes I have half a drawing completely finished and I take a step back and I look at the other half of the page and its completely blank. Normally, having a background in art means you find your sketchbook and you make time to practice, then go for it. But with me, I feel the inspiration and I sit down and then go for it. I don't know what I'm doing half the time, but I go for it any way. Sometimes I see works that I like and I try to remake them. I analyse, I deconstruct and try and find out how they came to create the different works. The brush strokes, the colours, everything. I try to learn how the artist is working overall. It's a big part of teaching yourself.

How easy is it to embrace mistakes and error in your work?

In my work and also in the medium I usually work with, I can't make any mistakes. In the past I would destroy all my mistakes, but I really do give myself a lot of stress over my work, I feel this is the way I produce best. Some drawings have mistakes that people don't realise actually are mistakes, but, for me, it's not my style. If, for example, there's a pattern in a drawing it's easy to make a mistake in the pattern because I'm so focused on so focused on one part of the piece that I make a mistake which I won't see until I take a step back. My drawing "The Birth of Venus" took me 2 years to complete, I painted everything at least 5 times over to get the colour and definition.

How do you navigate the art world? Do you ever feel like you have been thrown in the deep end?

I can't be everything, I'd like to be like an octopus and try everything, but in reality I can't. When I was a kid ,I drew in the back of my fathers van. He was an engineer, and he was always so proud of my drawings, but when it came to me saying I wanted to be an artist, he said no - and that I had to get a 'real' job. So in the sense of my background, and how I chose to follow my passion, yes I have been thrown in the deep end.

The art world is very difficult...

You are your own boss, you are your own company. But it's not about being fantastic, for me, it's about the amount of effort you put into it. If it's hard here, in Brazil it's almost non existent, but I keep going, you have to create movement in your life, and eventually, everything will then start to move around you.

"I love drawing, obsessively, if I'm not suffering for it,
I don't feel like I'm making art. If I find an easy route,
then it's not worth it for me. I need to put in 100 hours
rather than 5 hours to give myself the satisfaction and
the reassurance that it's perfect and worth my hard work.
I make it difficult, because that's what I think art
should be... anything but easy."

— SABRINA COLLARES



Who is WILLIAM REINSCH?

The figurative painter, who works at his canvas for 8 hours every day, cities a deeper need for communication as an on-going inspiration behind his work. When human to human conversation was a struggle, Reinsch turned to painting. As the pathways of communication constantly evolve, so does the language of art - Reinsch works as an avid experimenter in his field, using a range of materials from brushes, to toilet paper and even sandpaper on occasion. William Reinsch unveils 4 things viewers of his work should know about him, as an artist:

1. If a piece of art is not challenging me in some way I tend to find it quite boring and uninspiring.

I think the more I learn as an artist the more I appreciate and get excited by the stranger and more mystifying. When it comes to my own work I am striving to be avant garde but there is only so much experimentation I can do. I need to keep the wheel moving (refining my technical ability) whilst searching and playing around with new possibilities. It can be hard to juggle the two because the new thing I choose to develop may overlap and replace a very refined area which I will have to throw away or even unlearn. I have to weigh whether the risks are worth it. I know for a fact I am a terrible judge of what new ideas are worth seeing through going by the amount of canyases I throw out.

2. Usually there are no idea's flowing when I work.

It's really just grinding. Of course I have to concentrate and try to feel what i'm doing but nothing else is going through my mind other than the work at hand. The idea's are something that come about away from all that, usually in the night when I am reflecting on the day's work. Francis Bacon said that inspiration comes from regular work. The longer I keep the momentum going the more focused I become on what it is i'm searching for. You travel further into that world and find more well fitted ideas rather than just clutching at straws. I will have to take a day off when I feel the momentum start to stagnate which does happen usually after a week or two. It's very important not to burn yourself out and keep the flame burning for as long as possible.

3. The nudity in my work is something very personal. It represents the anxiety I feel around other people.

I feel stripped, vulnerable and open. The best way I could manifest this visually would be with a nude figure. I try to take it a bit further with the color and will maybe make a body bright yellow so that it catches your eye. It's then a sort of unwanted attention the figure brings, it doesn't want you to look at it but the color draws you in. The yellow is a representation of the anxiety itself.

4. I want to get across a feeling first and foremost, everything else is just a detail.

I think it's because of my agenda in art. I don't particularly care about realism or originality if there is no power in what it's communicating. There is a certain feeling you can get from art that words will never come close to. It feels like an almost spiritual sensation, like you have been enlightened. It all makes sense but you couldn't describe it to someone. It makes sense only in the art itself. That's what I'm aiming for in my work, I want to get that feeling out of me and onto the canvas to share with the world. This is my way of communicating, not with words but with feelings only a piece of art can possess.

"I think the more I learn as an artist the more I appreciate and get excited by the stranger and more mystifying."

- WILLIAM REINSCH







Curator's Column

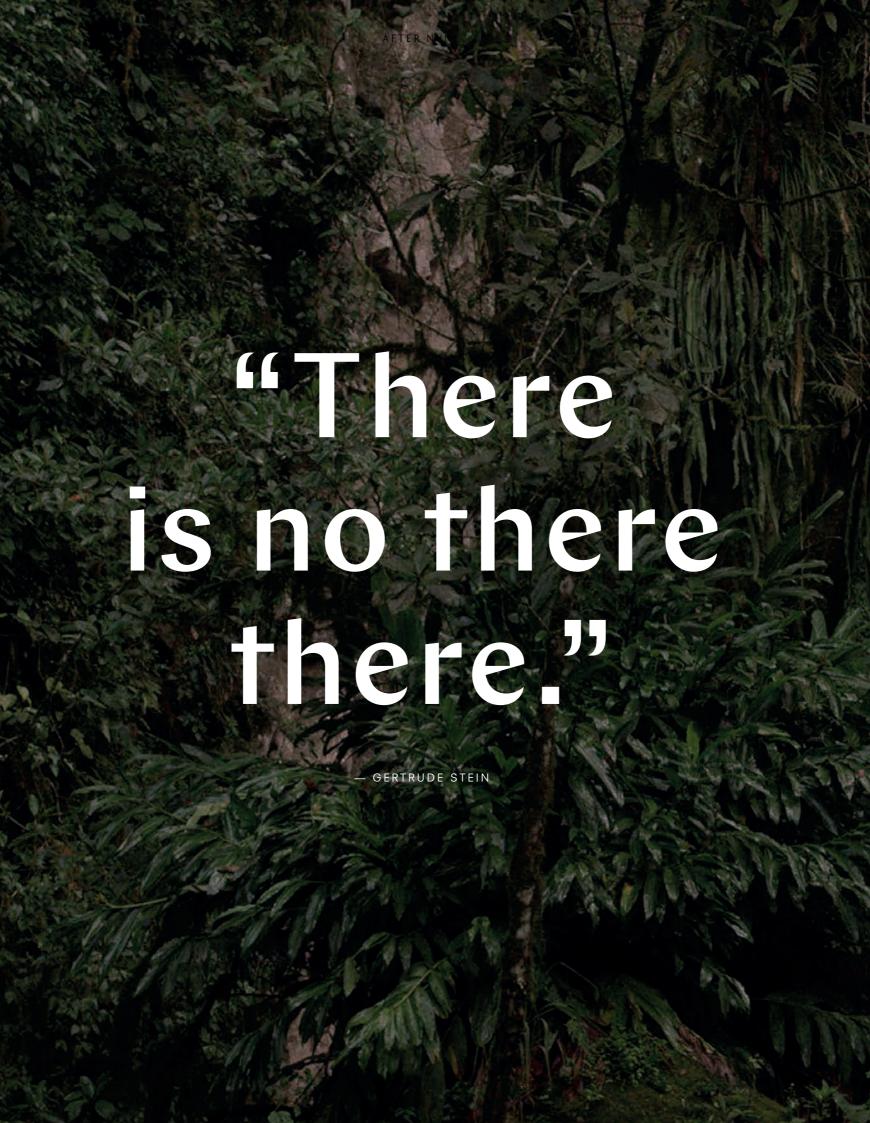
Angry Penguins: The Two-Sided Lake & Other Stories

WORDS · SALLY TALLANT

— DIRECTOR, LIVERPOOL BIENNALE

Liverpool Biennial 2016 is a Biennial that explores fictions, stories, histories and takes us through time and space in six episodes. Located in an actual place it draws from the past, present and future. These journeys take us to worlds in the form of exhibitions and in each encounter we learn more about the protagonists of these adventures into the multiverse.







All histories and practices are relevant, the language of the Avant Garde and modernism is as relevant as the relics from Ancient Greece that have been borrowed from National Museums Liverpool, and appropriated by artists in a contemporary mash-up. Koenraad Dedobbeleer has made prop-like sculptures that support and re-present fragments of Ancient Greek artifacts; feet, hands, body parts come together and create a monstrous recombinant Frankenstein-like figure – a hermaphrodite that has become the narrator of the exhibitions.

This episodic format invites artists to work together to take risks and to travel in time, making their work in Ancient Greece, Chinatown, The Children's Episode, as Software and in the form of Monuments from the Future and sometimes as a Flashback. If the values of experimentation and innovation as well as pushing boundaries were defining qualities of the Avant Garde it could be argued that these artists are doing this. However historical tropes are contextual and located in time, as Gertrude Stein expressed so brilliantly:

"There is no there there"

Although the term Avant Garde is generally applied to innovative approaches to making art in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it can be applicable to any art that pushes the boundaries of ideas and creativity, and is often used to describe practices that are 'radical'. It is possible to draw on these methods and histories; and to learn from and be inspired by artists and practices, but context is always defining.

The ability we now have to exist in more than one place simultaneously, and the fact that we can use technology as a window that propels us into other times, and effectively collapses geography, means that we cannot operate any more in a singular moment. This Biennial presents many collective voices; artists and curators have worked together and created stories with multiple entry points and possibilities. These works are only possible if the individual plays their part in the narrative; in this way Liverpool Biennial 2016 celebrates what is possible when we work collectively to present work in and of the world in which we live. The emphasis in this case is not on the vision of an individual, but rather the extraordinary possible worlds envisaged and actualised by many people working together.

Expect to experience, portals by Celine Conderelli and Rita McBride, performances and time-based interruptions that involve artists, the public, children and animals. Marvin Gaye Chetwynd has collaborated with children to devise, construct and shoot a film that brings together Betty Boop and Bertold Brecht. Films that act as tools for exploring a city - Samson Kamula - or travel in time - Fabien Giraud and Raphael Siboni. Archives and histores have played a critical role and by uncovering the work and thinking of Stafford Beer, Olaf Stapelton and others a new lens of understanding can bring their visions of the future from the past, into the present and allow us to better understand what might have been and what is yet come. This process has allowed us to explore the Biennial as an episode in time and we have found ways to create conversations with the city. I am not sure whether or not the Avant Garde is informing our ways of working but we are creating new ways to collaborate, to take risks and to think things, so perhaps it could be said that we are doing things that might not have been done quite like this before.

PREVIOUS SPREAD:
The Unmanned (2045–The Death of Ray Kurzweil),
2014, Fabien Giraud & Raphaël Siboni

DISTRIBUTION & CONTACT

EDITORIAL CALENDAR

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